Phragmites australis (Phragmites or Reed Grass)

- Height: 6-14 ft
- Blooming period: September - October
- Characteristics: 2-ranked, wide, bluish-green leaves

This basic field guide illustrates the most common plants in Virginia’s tidal salt marshes where the salinity range is between 10-25 ppt. Salt marsh vegetation is divided into zones based on the extent of tidal inundation. Each plant’s location in the marsh is indicated by the color that matches the zonation depicted in the cross-section. The most recognizable feature of each plant is also featured with illustrations and photographs.
**Spartina alterniflora** (Smooth Cordgrass)
- 1-8 ft
- August - October

**Spartina cynosuroides** (Big Cordgrass)
- up to 10 ft
- July - October

**Juncus roemerianus** (Black Needle Rush)
- up to 3 ft
- April - October

**Scirpus robustus** (Salt Marsh Bulrush)
- 2-3 ft
- July - October

**Iva frutescens** (Marsh Elder)
- 2-6 ft
- August - October

**Baccharis halimifolia** (Groundsel Tree)
- up to 8 ft
- September - October

**Distichlis spicata** (Salt Grass)
- 8-16 in
- July - September

**Panicum virgatum** (Switch Grass)
- up to 3 ft
- July - September

**Solidago sempervirens** (Seaside Goldenrod)
- 4-5 ft
- August - October

**Limonium spp.** (Sea Lavender)
- 1-8 ft
- August - October

**Aster tenuifolius** (Salt Marsh Aster)
- 1-4 ft
- July - September
**Spartina alterniflora** (Smooth Cordgrass)
- 1-8 ft
- August - October

**Spartina patens** (Salt Meadow Hay)
- 1-3 ft
- July - September

**Spartina cynosuroides** (Big Cordgrass)
- up to 10 ft
- July - October

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- up to 3 ft
- April - October

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- 4-5 ft
- August - October

**Lavender Flowers**
- Pale purple, blue, or white daisy-like flowers
- Alternate, flexuous, linear leaves

**Tall Grass**
- Dense clusters of small, white, daisy-like flowers
- Opposite, fleshy, lance-shaped, toothed leaves

**Basal Leaves**
- Lavender Flowers
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**Phragmites australis** (Phragmites or Reed Grass)
- Height: 6-14 ft
- Blooming period: September - October
- Description: 2-ranked, wide, bluish-green leaves

**Borrichia frutescens** (Sea Oxeye)
- Height: up to 3 ft
- Blooming period: July - September

**Salicornia spp.** (Glasswort)
- Height: 4-20 in
- Blooming period: July - November

**Kosteletzya virginica** (Marsh Mallow)
- Height: 2-3 ft
- Blooming period: July - August

**Hibiscus moscheutos** (Marsh Hibiscus/Rose Mallow)
- Height: up to 12 ft
- Blooming period: July - September

**Atriplex patula** (Orach Spearscale or Marsh Orach)
- Height: up to 4 ft
- Blooming period: July - September

All illustrations in this brochure by Abigail Rorer from Field Guide to Coastal Wetland Plants of the Southeastern United States, Ralph W. Tiner, 1987, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, MA. 328 pp. This book is recommended reading for an easy-to-use Field guide to over 400 plants found in tidal wetlands of the Southeast, with more than 250 plants illustrated. It includes species found in the following habitats: tidal aquatic beds, salt marshes, mangrove swamps, and brackish marshes. Simple keys guide the reader in identification of these species. An overview of coastal wetland ecology is also presented along with information on and figures showing the general distribution of coastal wetlands along the South Atlantic and Gulf Coasts (Virginia to Texas).