

Eventually it will grow several feet above the original locality of germination or initial rhizome establishment.

As the dune becomes more or less stabilized by the switchgrass or beach grass, grape vines and poison ivy become established on the dunes; eventually cottonwood and willow appear, and finally oak (usually black oak).

The important position of switchgrass as one of the dominant dune builders is apparently rather specific to the Lake Erie beaches, since dune grass and sand reedgrass occupy this position on the Lake Michigan beaches and lower dunes. Switchgrass is more commonly found in Michigan associated with the later successional phases such as the oak forest. (Downing, 1922).

The historical factors which allowed the migration of the coastal species into the Great Lakes are no longer at play; once we lose our sand dune communities, they will be lost forever. The dedication of Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve will protect a vestige of the Lake Erie Dune community for this as well as future generations of Ohioans.

**Plant species found at Headlands Dunes:**

- Beach grass ..... *Ammophila breviligulata*
- Beach pea ..... *Lathyrus maritimus*
- Canada wild-rye ..... *Elymus canadensis*
- Clammy weed..... *Polanisia graveolens*
- Cocklebur ..... *Xanthium strumarium*
- Four-o'clock ..... *Mirabilis nyctagineus*
- Purple sand grass ..... *Triplasis purpurea*
- Sand dropseed ..... *Sporobolus crytandrus*
- Sand reedgrass ..... *Calamovilfa longifolia*
- Sea rocket ..... *Cakile edentula*
- Seaside spurge..... *Euphorbia polygonifolia*
- Switchgrass ..... *Panicum virgatum*
- Wafer ash ..... *Ptelea trifoliata*
- Wild bean ..... *Strophostyles helvola*
- Winged pigweed ..... *Cycloma atriplicifolium*



**Trees:**

- Black oak ..... *Quercus velutina*
- Cottonwood..... *Populus deltoides*
- Willow ..... *Salix nigra*

Prepared by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Natural Areas and Preserves in conjunction with J. Bissell, Staff Botanist, Cleveland Museum of Natural History.