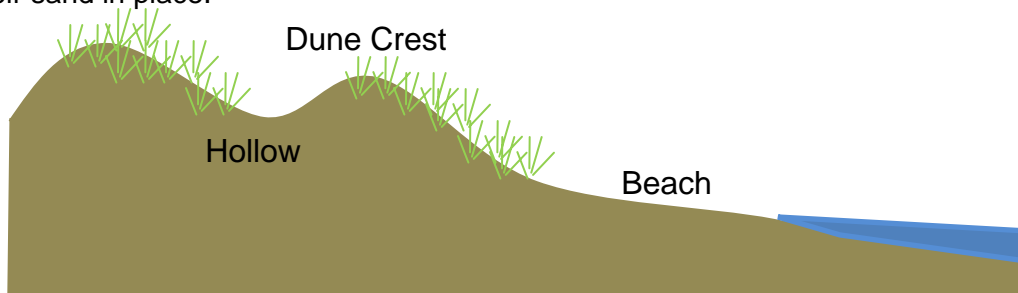


Coastal Sand Dune

Dunes are hills of sand that are formed by wind and water. They provide sand for beaches in front of them and protect the land behind them from coastal storms by absorbing wave energy. Dunes naturally migrate inland as wind and waves move sand from the windward side and to the leeward side (away from the wind).

Dunes are fragile because of the plants and animals that live in them as well as how easily they erode. Coastal construction and foot traffic endanger dunes by increasing how fast they erode and killing the plants that keep their sand in place.



Species in the coastal sand dune



American beachgrass
(*Ammophila breviligulata*)



Seaside goldenrod
(*Solidago sempervirens*)



Sea rocket
(*Cakile edentula*)



Beach Rose
(*Rosa rugosa*)



Northern bayberry
(*Myrica pensylvanica*)



Poison ivy
(*Toxicodendron radicans*)



Dusty miller
(*Artemisia stelleriana*)



Piping plover
(*Charadrius melodus*)



Common Tern
(*Sterna hirundo*)

Why would a sand dune be a difficult place for most plants to live?