

Significant Accomplishments of the Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force

March 2005 - March 2006

Major accomplishments over the past year since the last Beach Vitex symposium are highlighted. For a complete listing of activities and accomplishments, visit the "Task Force News" section of the Task Force website: www.beachvitex.org.

- **North and South Carolina joined together as the Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force** (formerly the South Carolina Beach Task Force) to enhance and support research and education efforts underway in both states.
- **Beach vitex ordinances** were passed for several communities in the Carolinas including: Folly Beach, SC; Edisto Beach, SC; Caswell Beach, NC; Village of Bald Head Island, NC; Pawleys Island, SC; and Georgetown County, SC.
- **A second grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation** was awarded to the Task Force to continue its research and education efforts. \$30,000 in grant funds was matched with over \$56,000 in contributions from task force partners and volunteers.
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program** has provided funding to produce a video about invasive species in the Winyah Bay Focus Area and specifically about Beach Vitex. The video project will be completed in 2006.
- **Locations of beach vitex on North and South Carolina beaches were reported** by volunteers and recorded in a geographical data base. This information is very helpful in identifying the extent of the problem and planning vitex removal and beach restoration efforts.
- **Hundreds of beach vitex seedlings were located and removed by volunteers** in North and South Carolina.
- **Research** was conducted on several aspects of beach vitex including which herbicides are most effective for eradication and what makes vitex such a successful invader. Research results are being applied to beach vitex removal and dune restoration projects.
- **Vitex was voluntarily removed by property owners** from several beach locations. Task force members provided guidance on best methods for removal and replanting with native plants.
- **Beach vitex talks and identification workshops** were presented by Task Force members to a variety of audiences including the Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful Committee, North Strand Master Gardeners, the SC Nursery and Landscape Association, and volunteers participating in an annual Sea Turtle Workshop hosted by SC DNR. The **3rd Annual Beach Vitex Symposium** was also held.
- **Extensive media coverage** has raised public awareness of the problems associated with beach vitex and the need to control it. Beach vitex was featured in several newspaper articles; on North Carolina Public Radio; and on a Myrtle Beach television channel.
- **New brochures were developed** to aid in beach vitex identification and have been used by volunteers surveying the beaches for vitex.
- **The Carolinas Beach Vitex Task Force Website was enhanced** and includes maps of beach vitex locations, summaries of research and education activities, and an easy-to-use electronic form for reporting vitex locations. Visit it at www.beachvitex.org.