

Lathyrus japonicus

Beach Pea

Native to Maine

Coastal
Saltmarshes and Dunes













Leaves



Omar Runolfsson, www.flickr.com



Look for leaves that are compound-pinnate with 6 to 12 leaflets per leaf. The leaflets alternate on the stem and are blue/green, waxy, and oval.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

Plant



Anita Gould, www.flickr.com



Look for a short plant with stems that wind along the ground. Stems grow up to 50 cm long.

Stem



Ken Lewis, www.flickr.com



Look for stems that are thick and strong at the bottom of the plant. They have a thin, curly part (a tendril) at the top that is used to help the Beach Pea climb.

Seasonal Change



Lance and Erin, www.flickr.com



From June to August look for light purple flowers in long bunches. From August to October look for seed pods that look like pea pods found in a garden.

www.vitalsignsme.org

Similar Species

The Beach Pea is often found with Sea Lavender and grasses that grow at the edge of beaches and saltmarshes. You can tell the Beach Pea apart because it has tendrils. Most of the other species have straight stems.

Fun Fact

The Beach Pea grows all around the world. The seeds stay alive in sea water for up to 5 years. That is long enough to drift from North America to Europe!