

ecosystems

The Dune

dune and
swale habitat

The dune habitat forms by deposited sand over time. During this time, grasses and plants anchor the sand to help the building process. In New York City and surrounding areas, American Beach Grass often serves to anchor the dunes in place. One outstanding growth characteristic is the strong underground stems or rhizomes that spread beneath the sand and give rise to many new plants. Its strong growth allows the plant to withstand heavy deposits of sand and grow up through it. Primary dunes are first to form and closest to the beach and ocean. Secondary dunes form behind the primary dunes. The dune's purpose is to act as a weather barrier to the rest of the island behind it.

How does American Beach Grass keep the dunes in place?

Is there a greater variety of animals and plants in the primary dune or secondary dune habitat and why?

Why do you think the American Beach Grass plant has evolved rhizomes as a method to obtain nutrients?

The swale habitat is located in the depression between dunes. You can find a more diverse animal and plant life there.

How can a greater diversity of plants and animals survive in the swale habitat?

How does weather effect what can live here in the swale?

How does weather effect what can live here in the swale?

Define rhizomes:

Draw a diagram showing the dune what is before it and what is after it.



ocean side

Standard LE 5.1d.e

Our goal is to learn about beach habitats and to recognize trends and patterns

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