

Tips For Landscaping Yard At The Seacoast

BY DOROTHY SELLERS

(Dorothy Sellers is a retired teacher who has taken up landscape gardening as a hobby. She lives at Shallotte Point.)

Landscaping a new yard by the seacoast where sandy soil prevails is something of a challenge. Sandy beach land needs even more special treatment than loamy soil or soil with clay deposits.

The wind off the water brings a fine silt of soil and salt over the front lawn. Combined with cold wind in winter, this is detrimental to plants. Even dogwoods and fruit trees are not properly shaped in this location, but are bent sideways by the wind.

All plants grow better on the back of the house, protected from the elements.

Shrubs, perennials or annuals in any sandy location do best planted in potting soil mixed with peat moss.

For front landscaping, or that side of the house facing the water, the best bet is to use plants from the surrounding woodlands, as they are already acclimated to the area. Wild myrtles make the transition easily, and bulbs such as lilies, jonquils, and tulips are dependable.

Any landscape plan, however, begins with considering the

topography of the land and the space, size and shape of the house and grounds.

Send a sample of the soil to the Agricultural Department of North Carolina State University in Raleigh, to identify nutrients missing in the soil and determine the soil type.

While awaiting this analysis, draw a rough sketch of the house and grounds, to plan basic plantings. If the home sits low to the ground, consider low-growing shrubs. Consider the color of the house, too. If brownish wood or brick, use evergreen shrubs along with others of color.


Are there too many trees close to the house? Be sure to thin the closest ones away before your yard is established. Too many trees take away from soil fertility.

Think of your garden and grounds as an outdoor living room, where the family can relax and play. Decide if you want rock gardens with mosses and ferns, a desert scene with yucca and cacti, or an English garden, with informal groupings and no fixed pattern.


Landscaping your property to improve your home's appearance is a pleasant, rewarding task. To feel more secure about it, you can read one of the following books, available in libraries and book stores: "The Garden Flowers in Color" by G.A. Stevens; "Garden Bulbs in Color" by J.H. McFarland, R.M. Hatton, and D.J. Foley; "Vegetable Gardening in Color" by D.J. Foley; and "Seacoast Plants of the Carolinas" by Karl Graetz, available for \$2 from Sea Grant, Box 8605, NCSU, Raleigh, 27695-8605.



STAFF PHOTO BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN
DOROTHY SELLERS has landscaped each of her family's five homes. Here she attacks the weeds in a bed of chrysanthemums in her front yard near Shallotte Point, a view of Breakfast Creek in the background.



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