

Beach morning glory

(*Ipomoea imperati*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Beach morning glory is a trailing evergreen vine with showy white flowers. It typically blooms in summer and fall but may bloom year-round. It occurs naturally on coastal dunes where it is an important sand stabilizer.

Blooms are large (about 2"+) and funnel-shaped with fused white petals and yellow centers. Calyces are five-lobed. Leaves are small in comparison to the bloom. Leaf shape varies, but is generally elliptic to oval and lobed with a notched apex. Leaves are leathery, succulent and alternately arranged. Stems are smooth. Seeds are large and borne in capsules.

Like other members of the *Ipomoea* genus, Beach morning glory flowers are ephemeral; they bloom in the morning and begin to wilt and close up by afternoon, hence the common name "morning glory."

The family name Convolvulaceae comes from the Greek *convolvere*, which means "to wind," referring to the winding nature of the stems.

Family: Convolvulaceae (Morning glory family)

Native range: Coastal counties (from Escambia east to Franklin; from Nassau south into the Keys; Levy, Hernando, Pinellas and Charlotte)

To see where natural populations of Beach morning glory have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Hardiness: Zones 8–10b

Soil: Dry to moist, well-drained, sandy soils

Exposure: Full sun

Growth habit: up to 6" with 10–20'+ spread

Propagation: Seeds, cuttings

Garden tips: Beach morning glory is drought- and salt-tolerant. It does well in low-nutrient soils. It is low-growing and non-climbing, but has a tendency to grow fast and spread quickly; it is best suited for coastal landscapes and dune restoration sites where it can sprawl freely. In the right conditions, however, it can be used as a groundcover if closely maintained.

Caution: Some species in the *Ipomoea* genus are known to be toxic to humans if ingested.

Beach morning glory plants are often available at nurseries that specialize in native plants. Visit PlantRealFlorida.org to find a native nursery on your area.



Photo by Bill Frank,
taken near Mayport Naval Station, Duval County