



American Beach Grass

East Lyme's Overlook Park Progress Report #51

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On April 9, 2016, the East Lyme Public Trust Foundation, Inc. (ELPTF) initiated its beach stabilization demonstration project adjacent to the Boardwalk. The particulars of that project are described in the May 2016 issue of The Post Road Review.

American Beach Grass (*Ammophila breviligulata* Fern.) seedlings grown in a specialized nursery on Cape Cod were planted in four test plots holding a total of 400 seedlings that were each about eight inches high.

On July 12th, 2016, 94 days after they were planted, the photographs above and below were taken. Remarkably, virtually all 400 seedlings survived. Their average height was approximately 29 inches, which is slightly more than 3.5 times taller than when they were planted.

Undoubtedly, the care of fertilizing and watering the seedlings by the ELPTF staff, insured the success of this critical, early phase of the project.



A very significant and unexpected aspect of the planting was the appearance of a plant that the State of Connecticut protects as a "Species of Special Concern." That species of seabeach sandwort, *Honckenya peploides*, colonized, or had been transplanted from the east shore of the Niantic River, to the Boardwalk Beach. It is an inconspicuous part of the flora of the beach - but it is one that contributes to the ecological diversity and biological value of this newly expanded beach habitat on our Niantic Bay shoreline.

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