

## PROTECTING OUR FRAGILE DUNES



The dune is the backbone of the barrier island. Barrier islands are so named because they provide a barrier between the ocean and other features, such as estuaries, lagoons and salt marshes. Vegetation is critical in dune building and stabilization. The dune plants are responsible for the piling up of sand and the gradual growth of the dune. Damage to the dune structure and vegetation weaken the dune's stability, predisposing the dune to further damage from high surf and storms.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- *Use the boardwalks to walk to and from the beach. Foot traffic kills the fragile dune plants.*
- *When surf is high and little or no beach is available, stay off that area of the beach.*
- *Do not enter dune areas or dig holes into the side of the dune.*
- *Keep out of closed areas.*
- *Do not disturb dune vegetation.*
- *Even though the wind may be cold, do not seek shelter in the dune vegetation.*
- *Take your trash out with you. Properly dispose of items like plastic bags and fishing line, which can injure wildlife.*