

# MARITIME FOREST

## Overview

The maritime forests provide a protective buffer between the mainland and the sea. The live oak, palmetto, cedar, bay, and wax myrtle are all tolerant of the rough salt, sun, spray, and wind conditions.

Some maritime forests are found on the mainland, such as those on the rim of the Francis Marion National Forest, but most exist on barrier islands, such as Bulls Island on Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge. There you will find an abundance of animals thriving year-round, using the forest as a protected resting place and as a source of precious food.



Fox Squirrel (*Sciurus niger*)

## Species Checklist

### Animals

Black fox squirrel  
Great-horned owl  
Osprey  
Painted bunting  
Raccoon

### Plants

Banana waterlily  
Cabbage palmetto  
Eastern red cedar  
Live oak  
Resurrection fern  
Spanish moss  
Wax myrtle

## Vocabulary

barrier island            buffer  
migratory                tolerant  
endangered  
inundation  
live-oaking  
maritime

## Important Messages

- The maritime forest is home to a multitude of birds. Both migratory and year-round birds use these areas for food, shelter, and rest.
- The maritime forest acts as a protective barrier between the mainland and the ocean. The plant life within this habitat is specially adapted to withstand salt inundation, high tides and high winds.
- Bulls Island is the largest maritime forest island in Cape Romain Refuge at 5,000 acres. The red wolf recovery program was initiated on Bulls because it possesses the correct habitat requirements for the red wolf. It ceased in 2005.
- Live oak and cabbage palmetto are the most abundant trees within the maritime forest community. In colonial days, live oak wood was used for shipbuilding. The process of selecting the best trees is called "live-oaking."

Maritime Forest Habitat  
in the Forest & Refuge  
(in black)

