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## **Orrin Pilkey to Headline Federation's Native Plant Festival**

OCEAN - It's a fun, family-friendly event full of beautiful plants, flowers and shrubs; coastal artists and craftsmen; entertainment and special guests. You'll want to spend the day at the N.C. Coastal Federation's annual Native Plant Festival on Saturday, April 28. (Or become a member of the federation and get a sneak peek the day before.)

The festival takes place at federation headquarters, 3609 N.C. 24 in Ocean – about halfway between Morehead City and Swansboro - from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Members' Preview takes place April 27 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

There are lots of new features highlighting the 2012 festival. Special guest Orrin Pilkey will offer discussions and answer questions about global climate change during the festival and during the Members' Preview. Pilkey is director emeritus of the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, now at Western Carolina University and the James B. Duke Professor Emeritus at Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences. He recently published the book, *Global Climate Change: A Primer*, with batik illustrations by Mary Edna Fraser

Pilkey will chat with federation members and discuss and sign his new book on Friday from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. On Saturday he'll be on hand to talk and sign his book from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fraser will display some of her work and be available to explain the art that highlights Pilkey's book.

Craftsmen and artists will surround the federation grounds with hand-crafted pottery, jewelry, baskets, bird houses, art and more. Popular folk artist Frank Gaines will entertain with environmental songs and ballads. Hungry festival-goers can enjoy fresh-baked muffins and deli sandwiches from Garden Gate Deli.

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You can work off that muffin in Saturday afternoon when Second Wind Ecotours and Yoga Studio offer an afternoon session of Qi Gong from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Dea Daniels, a registered nurse, will conduct the session, which is appropriate for most physical levels. Qi Gong is a powerful system of healing and energy medicine from China that uses breathing techniques, gentle movement and focus to cleanse, strengthen and circulate the life energy. The session is free, but donations will be accepted.

Of course, the main attraction is the almost 4,000 native plants, flowers, shrubs and trees that will be available for sale. Native plants, also called indigenous plants, are plants that have evolved over thousands of years in a particular region. Coastal natives, for instance, have adapted to the geography, hydrology and climate of the region and therefore thrive with less care. A community of native plants provides habitat for a variety of native wildlife species such as songbirds and butterflies.

Native plants also provide a beautiful, hardy, drought-resistant, low-maintenance landscape while benefiting the environment. Once established, they save time and money by eliminating or significantly reducing the need for fertilizers, pesticides and water and lawn maintenance equipment.

This year's plant collection offers the best-sellers of festivals past, including purple muhly, American snowball, blazing star, hibiscus, pink azalea and purple coneflower. If you're looking to trim your grocery bill, you might consider fruit-bearing shrubs and trees. Black cherry trees, elderberry, blueberry and persimmon trees do well in our coastal area and will be available.

If you're a little uncertain about selecting plants, our experts can help you make a selection that's right for your location, soil and exposure. Each plant comes with planting instructions and helpful tips for their care.

Rain barrels will be back this year by popular demand. They are an eco-conscious and economical way to conserve water and care for all the new plants you'll be placing in your yard. The 30-gallon barrels tend to sell quickly at \$60 (\$50 for federation members).

Federation members get a sneak peek at the massive plant assortment on Friday, April 27, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. and an early opportunity to purchase plants and a chance to meet and chat with Pilkey and Fraser. Members are required to show their membership card for

admittance. Guests and visitors may join on-site or online at the federation's Web site,  
[www.nccoast.org](http://www.nccoast.org)

To learn more about the Native Plant Festival or to join the federation and attend the Members' Preview, visit the federation's Web site or call 252-393-8185.