

Prairie Urban Garden - Oldman Watershed Council

Xeriscape Priority Plant List

GRASSES

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Blue Grama
Scientific Name	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>
Origin	Native; in Canada this species can be found in the southern portions of the four western provinces and Ontario. It is a dominant species of the Mixedgrass Prairie. In the U.S. it common to the Great Plains, reaching as far south as Texas.
Height	30-45 cm (12-18")
Spread	30 cm (12")
Life Form	Blue Grama is a warm season (C ₄) bunchgrass with short rhizomes (horizontal underground stems). It has short curly leaves and when it flowers doubles its height.
Flower Color	The flower of Blue Grama is very distinctive and provides an attractive burgundy – purple color at maturity; changing from its original green color at early season. Equally attractive is the type of inflorescence called a second spike (one-sided). The flowers are all concentrated to one side of the flowering stem providing Blue Grama with an informal common name of eye-brow grass.
Foliage Color	The leaves of Blue Grama are green and are relatively short with curly ends as they mature.
Flowering Period	Mid to late summer.
Habitat	This is a full sun species that does not do well in the shade. It naturally occurs in upland terrain, common to southern exposures. This selection prefers well drained soils and does equally well in sandy or clay textured soils. It is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	If this grass is used as a sod replacement it can be mowed or left as is. If it is mowed it should be cut no lower than 10 cm (4") during the growing season. Litter build-up will be modest and spring clean up will be minimal. If the grass is not mowed it should be cut back in the spring to 15 cm (6"). The reduction in litter material will allow the crowns of the grass to warm up quicker and initiate growth sooner. If Blue Grama is used as an accent plant it should be treated like the un-mowed lawn by cutting back the grass to about one third of the original height in early spring before green-up occurs.
Availability	Blue Grama can be found at native plant suppliers and nurseries. It is not common to general plant nurseries and is not found in seasonal garden centers. When this grass is used as a sod replacement it should be purchased as seed and sown at 1.8 kg per 93 m ² (4 lbs. per 1000 ft ²). Where as if it is used as an accent plant or small grouping etc. the plugs are recommended. This selection is

	also sold through mail order.
Special Notes	<p>This grass species is an excellent selection to replace a traditional front lawn sod treatment. It can tolerate moderate traffic and mowing. In fact, the increased mowing promotes rhizomatous growth; thereby resembling a traditional lawn appearance. However, if mowed you will miss out on the showy inflorescence. If you do not plan to mow your Blue Grama grass it will develop and set seed; thereby over time providing a dense cover of drought tolerant grass. Blue Grama in most years to sustain active growth during the heat of the summer would only need supplemental water once every two-three weeks. ed with Junegrass to provide early season green-up.</p> <p>Blue Grama establishes relatively easy from seed so long as it sown to a shallow depth and at least a couple months ahead of the first frost to allow for adequate first year "establishment".</p> <p>A companion grass that goes well with Blue Grama is Junegrass (<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>). When Junegrass is included in a seed mixture with Blue Grama it greens up earlier because it's a cool season (C₃) grass species. When the Junegrass goes dormant in the heat of the summer, Blue Grama is actively growing thereby providing a season long, drought tolerant sod lawn replacement.</p>

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Feather Reed Grass
Scientific Name	<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> "Karl Foerster"
Origin	Non-native; this selection is a hybrid cross from Germany, developed by Karl Foerster in 1971.
Height	Vegetation: 90-100 cm (36-39") Inflorescence 150-200 cm (5-6'6")
Spread	45 cm (18")
Life Form	Upright, columnar, clumping early season (C ₃) bunchgrass.
Flower Color	A large panicle (multiple branched inflorescence) in early season with pink- purple spikelets which change to a light brown color as it matures.
Foliage Color	Long, ascending green leaves.
Flowering Period	Early to mid summer; but the old inflorescence is retained on the plant and maintains its aesthetic appeal well into the winter.
Habitat	Full sun to partial shade. This grass is highly variable; it is capable like many within its genus to tolerate moist water saturated soils and dry upland soils. It will grow in both sandy and clay textured soils. The growth potential of this grass is strongly correlated to its habitat; the greater the moisture the larger its potential growth. It is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This grass is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. This selection starts growth very early in the spring, and therefore clean-up should occur early to mid March. Feather Reed

	Grass should be cut back to 15-30 cm (6-12") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels.
Availability	It is available from a number of different plant suppliers including general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers. It can be purchased in the form of plugs and various sized containers. This selection is also sold through mail order.
Special Notes	This is a non-native species, but is a hybrid cross that is a sterile variety or does not set seed. Therefore, it lessens the concern of potential spread by an introduced species. A very attractive plant providing dramatic vertical interest. This specimen provides excellent winterscape value by remaining upright through the snow with its sandy brown panicle inflorescence. There are other varieties of Feather Reed Grass, but the Karl Forester is likely the most widely available and arguably the most stunning in appearance. Further, for Southern Alberta it is probably the one that is best suited to tolerate drought conditions.

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Blue Oatgrass
Scientific Name	<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i>
Origin	Non-native species originating from Central and Southwest Europe.
Height	Vegetation: 50-60 cm (20-24"), Inflorescence 100 cm (39")
Spread	30-45 cm (12-18")
Life Form	Dense clumping cool season (C ₃) bunchgrass with radiating rigid leaves arising basally.
Flower Color	Loose panicle inflorescence, light brown to straw colored.
Foliage Color	Stiff, rigid silver-blue to steel blue leaves. Considered semi-evergreen in colder environments such as Alberta
Flowering Period	Early to mid summer
Habitat	Full sun to very light sun. Blue Oatgrass requires well drained soils, their roots will not tolerate wet soils; they will rot in poorly drained soils. This selection is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This grass is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15-30 cm (6-12") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible.
Availability	It is available from a number of different plant suppliers including general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers. It can be purchased in the form of plugs and various sized containers. This selection is also sold through mail order.
Special Notes	If this genus sounds familiar, Alberta has a lone native species

	<p>within this genus called Hooker's Oat Grass (<i>Helictotrichon hookeri</i>). It is fairly common to our Fescue grassland and some open grassland Montane habitats. Unfortunately, this species is not commercially available.</p> <p>This plant is a great addition to any yard with its vivid blue foliage. It can be used as a single accent plant, in small groupings, or try it in a mass planting to provide a groundcover effect and create a real distinctive look.</p>
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Attribute	Response
Common Name	Switch Grass
Scientific Name	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
Origin	Native and native cultivars. The native species is rare in Alberta but is found in the southeastern portion of the Province and extends eastward through Saskatchewan, Manitoba and southern Ontario. It is common to the mid and eastern U.S.; it extends as far south as Texas.
Height	Vegetation: 70-100 cm (28-39") Inflorescence: 120-150 cm (47-59")
Spread	60-90 cm (24-36")
Life Form	This is a well behaved (slow spreading) warm season (C ₄) grass. It is loosely tufted in appearance but it does possess rhizomes. However, it is not aggressive and is easily contained to a specific area; not always the case with many other rhizomatous grass species.
Flower Color	The native species produces green spikelets with an open & diffuse panicle inflorescence. The cultivars produce a similar style of panicle inflorescence but with burgundy colored flowers.
Foliage Color	The native species develops green leaves tinged with red. However, some of the cultivars have really capitalized on this characteristic and produce leaves that start out green with red tinges but change over to a deep red, burgundy color as the season progresses; thus explaining the 'Switch Grass' common name and ' <i>virgatum</i> ' scientific name. A couple cultivars also produce a striking steel-blue foliage color and remain as is over the growing season.
Flowering Period	Late summer; August
Habitat	This species will do best in full sun. Remember, this is a warm season species and will function better in open, hot locations. The native species is common to moist soils but it is quite tolerant of dry soils. This species will benefit from clay soils with its positive moisture holding capabilities. The species and cultivars (recommended here) are Hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This grass is easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6"). All warm season grasses get a slow start to the season so they will benefit from removing litter and standing decadent plant material from covering the soil surface.

	This will allow the soil to heat up quicker and thereby providing quicker plant green-up. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible
Availability	The native species can be found in many native plant suppliers and nurseries. The cultivars are common to general plant nurseries and in some selected seasonal garden centers. The native species can be purchased in the form of seeds, plugs and containers. The cultivars are common to plugs and various sized containers. This species and its cultivars are also sold through mail order.
Special Notes	Certainly, the most admired trait of Switch Grass is the variegated vegetation and witnessing the color change over the growing season. There are a few varieties that take advantage of this attribute, but I would suggest one in particular because it is a hardier variety. A good selection that produces a robust version of the red-burgundy foliage is Red Switch Grass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Rotstrahlbusch'). The other Red Switch Grass variety is called 'Shenandoah' but it is reported hardy to only Zone 4. The blue colored foliage variety recommended is called Prairie Sky Switch Grass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Prairie Sky'). The other blue colored variety is called 'Heavy Metal' but once again is hardy to only Zone 4.

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Idaho Fescue, Bluebunch Fescue
Scientific Name	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>
Origin	Native, this species is common to the Fescue grasslands and open forested/grassland communities in Southern British Columbia and the Fescue Prairie grasslands in Alberta & Saskatchewan. It can be found in all of the Western United States, as far south as Arizona and New Mexico.
Height	Vegetation: 30 cm (12") Inflorescence: 90 cm (36")
Spread	25 cm (10")
Life Form	This is a very fine textured, small statured, clumping, cool season (C ₃) bunchgrass.
Flower Color	This grass produces a relatively narrow, closed panicle. Each floret (flower) produces a noticeable awn (hair-like structure). The spikelets are green to tan colored as it matures.

Foliage Color	The leaves of Idaho Fescue are very distinctive, narrow - filamentous (2 mm wide) with a bluish- green color. In some cases the blue color is predominant and thus explains one of its common names.
Flowering Period	June-July
Habitat	This selection needs to be planted in full sun to maintain its bluish-green foliage color. Idaho Fescue grows on many different soil types so long as they are well drained. In nature it is common to southerly exposures within foothill rangelands, open woods and gravelly to rocky slopes. It is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This Fescue is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible.
Availability	Idaho Fescue is available at many native plant suppliers and nurseries. However, this Fescue species is not common to other commercial plant suppliers. Fortunately, there is secondary selection similar in nature to this species which is common to general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers. Idaho Fescue can be purchased in the form of seed, plug and small containers. It can also be obtained via mail order.
Special Notes	<p>Blue Fescue has been referred to in the literature as <i>Festuca glauca</i> or <i>Festuca ovina</i> var. <i>glauca</i>. It's a non-native species that resembles Idaho Fescue, but originates from Europe. The Blue Fescue has a couple of varieties that are common to most general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers. They include the 'Elijah Blue' and 'Border Blue' varieties. The Elijah Blue has silver-blue foliage whereas the Border Blue has intense deep blue foliage. Both varieties are only hardy to Zone 4 and therefore should only be used in Southern Alberta on southerly exposures. Further, unlike the long-lived native Idaho Fescue these two cultivars are relatively short-lived, and die back in the centers within a few years. Once this happens it is best to divide them, remove the dead centers, and then replant the living portion. This will maintain the neat and tidy mounding appearance of Blue Fescue.</p> <p>Also, they reproduce prolifically from seed and the following year will result in copious new juvenile growth. Therefore, deadhead the plants after flowering to restrict this flush of growth. However, recognizing this plant as a short lived species you may want to leave a few heads intact to provide for a modest future seed source.</p> <p>The Idaho Fescue or Blue Fescue can be used as an accent plant, but its landscape value really shines through when you group these plants in small or large clusters, or even mass them to provide a carpet of blue groundcover.</p>

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Junegrass
Scientific Name	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i> , <i>Koeleria gracilis</i> , <i>Koeleria pyramidata</i>
Origin	Native, this species has a wide distribution and is native to most of North America. Also, Junegrass is so widely distributed it is considered a circumpolar species.
Height	45 cm (18")
Spread	30 cm (12")
Life Form	This selection is a small statured cool season (C ₃) bunchgrass with mostly basal leaves. Its inflorescence is quite large relative to the size of its foliage.
Flower Color	Junegrass has a dense, contracted panicle inflorescence. The spikelets are green with white margins which mature to a straw-tan color.
Foliage Color	The leaves of Junegrass are greenish-blue in color and have prominent venation on the upper surface; they are primarily basal.
Flowering Period	Late spring to early summer. Junegrass is one of the earliest flowering native grasses in Alberta.
Habitat	Junegrass is best suited to full sun locations. It is widely distributed and it seems not too specific to soil texture; so long as they are well drained. In nature, Junegrass is commonly found on poor, dry soils associated with rocky slopes, open grasslands. The only habitat that it seems not to prefer is those associated with moister such as riparian areas. This is an extremely hardy species and from hardy to Zone 1.
Maintenance	Junegrass is an extremely low maintenance species that requires only to be cut back to about 15 cm (6") each spring; before any signs of green-up. The dormant vegetation should be left on the plant over the winter for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. It reproduces by seed but Junegrass is not particularly prolific this way and therefore deadheading the inflorescence is not required.
Availability	It is rather peculiar that Junegrass is so widely distributed across North America but the native species is only commercially available from native plant suppliers and nurseries. The species is widely available in seed form and plugs, but not as common in larger containers. Fortunately, Junegrass can be obtained through mail order from specialty plant nurseries. The Blue Hair Grass that will be discussed next is often the species from the genus <i>Koeleria</i> you find in the general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers. This later selection can be purchased in small containers.
Special Notes	Blue Hair Grass (<i>Koeleria glauca</i> 'oolio') is a non-native species similar in appearance to Junegrass. This particular selection originates from Europe and Asia. Blue Hair Grass as its name

	<p>suggests has a more bluish-green foliage than its native counterpart Junegrass. Blue Hair Grass is very easy to maintain; in the spring I just “rake” between the leaves with my open hand and pull out any of the loose and decadent material.</p> <p>This is a short statured cool season grass and serves as a companion species when it is used in a seed mix with the warm season Blue Grama (<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>). The two species provide an excellent drought tolerant, season long grass alternative to the traditional sod lawn.</p>
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Attribute	Response
Common Name	Prairie Dropseed
Scientific Name	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
Origin	Native. This species is a member of the Tall Grass Prairie, and thus historically was commonly found in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario. In the U.S. it is found in the Great Plains and eastward to Connecticut and Massachusetts.
Height	60–90 cm (24-36")
Spread	50–60 cm (20-24")
Life Form	This is a fine textured dense clumping warm season bunchgrass. Its foliage drapes over to provide a well defined mound.
Flower Color	It produces a wide open and diffuse panicle inflorescence. It has a light airy appearance. The spikelets are pink along with hints of brown.
Foliage Color	The leaves emerge deep green but as it matures in the Fall season they take on a wonderful golden color with shades of orange and pink.
Flowering Period	August - September
Habitat	Prairie Dropseed prefers full sunlight. It is a drought & heat tolerant species of the Tall Grass Prairie complex. In nature, it is commonly found along dry, rocky conditions, but it is tolerant of a wide array of soil conditions; even heavy clays – so long as they are well drained. This selection is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This selection needs at least three years to reach full potential and then considered established. It does not require much in the way of maintenance. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6"). All warm season grasses get a slow start to the season so they will benefit from removing litter and standing decadent plant material from covering the soil surface. This will allow the soil to heat up quicker and thereby providing quicker plant green-up. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value

	and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible
Availability	In southern Alberta Prairie Dropseed is not commonly available in plugs or container form. However, it is available in seed. But, do not despair it is available as plugs and small containers from a number of mail order specialty nurseries. This is a species worth the effort to go out of your way and order. Hopefully, with enough requests and pressure at our local plant suppliers this species will become part of the everyday inventory.
Special Notes	<p>Sand Dropseed (<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>) is another native Dropseed species found in Western Canada. It is very wide spread, and can be found throughout most of North America. However, it does not have the same landscape aesthetics that Prairie Dropseed possesses. The leaves of Sand Dropseed are more ascending and rigid. It too is available at many seed suppliers, so be specific when you order. The exception would be if your soils were very sandy and gravelly, then the Sand Dropseed would be the better choice to meet the habitat requirements.</p> <p>Prairie Dropseed can be used as an accent plant or in groupings. It can also be used as a border plant. The plants should be spaced between 45-60 cm (18-24") apart. The grass canopies will come together but with the proper spacing still provide the mounding, bunchgrass appearance. This selection can replace the hardscape building materials along the pathway and walkway edges to provide a much softer, natural look.</p>

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Needle and Thread
Scientific Name	Hesperostipa comata or Stipa comata
Origin	Native. This species is found throughout western Canada and southern portions of Ontario. In the U.S. it is equally as common as it is in Canada and can be found throughout all of the Midwestern and western states.
Height	Vegetation: 30 cm (12") Inflorescence: 45 cm (18")
Spread	30 cm (12")
Life Form	This grass is densely tufted cool season (C ₃) bunchgrass with primarily basal leaves.
Flower Color	<p>It produces a large, open panicle inflorescence with a very distinctive green colored spikelet. With maturity it senesces to a straw, tawny light brown color.</p> <p>The spikelet has a single sharp pointed floret (flower) which terminates with a long, curly and twisted awn (hair-like appendage). The floret description provides explanation for this plants common name; the sharp pointed floret is the needle and the awn represents</p>

	the thread.
Foliage Color	Produces narrow (3 mm) light green leaves; predominately basal in nature.
Flowering Period	Late spring to early summer
Habitat	Needle and Thread prefers full sunlight conditions. It is very drought and heat tolerant. In nature, it is commonly found on very well drained soils, including sandy to gravelly coarse textured soils. It frequents the head slope positions along dry hills and upland plains. This selection is not usually found in heavy clay soils. It is one of the most widely distributed native grass species in North America. It is at least hardy to Zone 2.
Maintenance	This grass is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible.
Availability	Needle and Thread is available from native plant suppliers and nurseries. It can be obtained through mail order from specialty plant nurseries. This selection is commonly sold in the form of plugs and small containers. Also, it is very frequently offered by seed producers and distributors. It has not made its way into the general plant nurseries and season garden centers. There are no commercially developed cultivars for this species.
Special Notes	Green Needlegrass (<i>Nassella viridula</i> or <i>Stipa viridula</i>) is also a native species that would serve as a good xeriscape selection. It is not showy as Needle and thread as it has much shorter awns. Whereas Needle and Thread did not tolerate heavy clay soils, Green Needlegrass would be a more suitable selection for this type of habitat. It has wider leaves (5 mm) than Needle and Thread but has similar growth potential. An interesting and real showy Needle Grass (<i>Stipa</i>) that is sold in some local seasonal garden centers is called Ponytails or Mexican Feather Grass (<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>). The species originates from Texas, Mexico and Chile. There are two concerns about this selection that Southern Albertans should be aware of: 1) it is hardy only to Zone 6 and, 2) it readily self seeds and if not controlled may represent a potential invasive threat?

Attribute	Response
Common Name	Little Bluestem
Scientific Name	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
Origin	Native. This species is widely distributed through the southern regions of Canada from coast to coast. It originally did not occur in British Columbia but it has since naturalized to the province. In the U.S. a similar story prevails; it is either native or naturalized to all but one of the lower 48 states, that one exception being Nevada.
Height	Leaves 45 cm (18"), Inflorescence 90 cm (36")
Spread	30 cm (12")
Life Form	This is an erect, fine textured warm season (C ₄) clumping to rhizomatous species. In mesic (moist) habitats its vegetative growth is more from rhizomes, but in xeric (dry) habitats it remains distinctly tufted or bunchgrass.
Flower Color	Little Bluestem produces a raceme inflorescence; the spikelets are pinkish in color. They have two florets (flowers) per spikelet; one of them fertile and the other sterile. When it releases its seeds in the Fall the whole spikelet goes with the seed, leaving behind only the stalk that was a part of the raceme.
Foliage Color	The emerging leaves in the spring reflect a light green with bluish tinge color; thus explaining its name. It changes at maturity during the late summer and fall to reflect combinations of rusty-orange to pinkish-red color foliage. When massed together Little Bluestem provides a very striking fall image.
Flowering Period	Late summer to early fall; August - September
Habitat	This selection prefers full sun and well drained soils. It is not particular to a specific soil type, but will not tolerate water saturated soils. It is a characteristic species of the Tall Grass Prairie and is also found sporadically within the Mixedgrass Prairie. It is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This grass is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible.
Availability	Little Bluestem is available from native plant suppliers & nurseries, as well as some general plant nurseries. It is not found through seasonal garden centers. It can be obtained through mail order via specialty plant nurseries. This selection is commonly sold in the form of plugs and small containers. Also, it can be obtained through seed producers and distributors.
Special Notes	Little Bluestem can also be found in cultivar form; these varieties highlight various vegetative features such as the initial blue foliage color. The Blue Little Bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> 'The Blues') as its name would suggest has vibrant blue foliage

	<p>throughout the growing season; changing to purple in the fall. The other native Bluestem that you are likely to encounter at your local plant nursery is Big Bluestem. However, this species is classified in a different genus; called <i>Andropogon girardii</i>. This selection is an iconic member of the Tall Grass Prairie reaching heights of 1.5 m (5') with a spread of 60 cm (24"). This species would work great as an individual accent plant or in small groups. It is drought tolerant, warm season (C₄), and hardy to Zone 3. Interestingly enough the Little Bluestem many years ago was once classified in this same genus and was called <i>Andropogon scoparius</i>.</p>
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Attribute	Response
Common Name	Indian Ricegrass
Scientific Name	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i> or <i>Oryzopsis hymenoides</i>
Origin	Native; this plant is common to the southern regions of the four western Canadian provinces. It is found in the Midwestern and western United States from Canada to Texas.
Height	50-70 cm (20-28")
Spread	30-45 cm (12-18")
Life Form	This is an upright, cool season (C ₃), densely tufted bunchgrass.
Flower Color	Indian Ricegrass produces a wide open, diffuse panicle with a single plump floret per spikelet. It emerges green in color and later matures to a straw-tan colored spikelet.
Foliage Color	This selection produces green, strongly in-rolled leaves that are mostly basal and almost as long as the culm (stem) itself. The old culms from previous year's growth are persistent and add to the strongly tufted, bunchgrass appearance.
Flowering Period	Late spring
Habitat	Indian Ricegrass is a full sunlight species. It is extremely drought and heat tolerant. In nature it can be found in sandy, gravelly, rocky course textured soils. It is common to southerly exposures and is considered an excellent soil stabilizer. It does not do well on wet or poorly drained soils. This species is hardy to Zone 3.
Maintenance	This grass is very easy to maintain; it only needs pruning once a year. It should be cut back to 15 cm (6") or about one-third of its height. The dormant vegetation should be left in place over the winter to allow for winterscape value and to help trap snow thereby recharging soil moisture levels. Trimming should occur late winter or early spring season before green-up is visible.
Availability	This selection is available from native plant suppliers/nurseries and mail order from specialty plant nurseries. Indian Ricegrass is commonly sold in the form of plugs and small containers. It can also be obtained through seed producers and distributors. It

	unfortunately is not found in general plant nurseries and seasonal garden centers.
Special Notes	This native grass is a very showy specimen that is severely underutilized as an ornamental specimen. It is one of the most drought tolerant grass species commercially available. The selection is relatively slow growing, but certainly worth the wait. First Nations collected the seed produced by Indian Ricegrass and ground it up to make flour; it is high in protein.