

BASKET GRASS VARIEGATED

Oplismenus hirtellus 'Variegatus'



Characteristics

- Type: Annual
- Flowers: not important
- Foliage: variegated foliage of pink, green and cream
- Mature height: 3"-6"
- Spread: 10'
- Soil: Well-drained
- Exposure: shade to light sun
- Water usage: medium

Culture

Variegated Basket Grass will grow to be only 6 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 8 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Variegated Basket Grass has attractive narrow leaves that remain olive green in color with showy white variegation and tinges of pink throughout the year. Neither the flowers nor the fruit are ornamentally significant. Basket grass or *Oplismenus hirtellus* is classified as a grass, yes, but it's beautiful. Its small, 2-inch-long, lance-shaped, bamboo-like leaves are variegated in hues of mint green, cream and pink. This spreading plant will grow 3 to 6 inches tall and it can actually spread to 10 feet across. This vigor is due to the plant's ability to root at each node that touches the soil, which makes this plant an excellent groundcover. The genus name *Oplismenus* is a derivative of the Greek word *hoplisimos*, which means weapon, a reference to the awn of the seed, the hair-like structure protruding from the floret, which resembles a small spear.

Problems

None noted.

Garden Uses

The bright coloring of the plant will lighten dark areas of your garden and provide an excellent contrast with other plants. This plant makes an excellent trailing addition to a basket or ceramic pot.