

SILVER FEATHER GRASS

Stipa barbata



Characteristics

- Type: Perennial Grass
- USDA Zones: 5 - 9
- Height: 2' - 3'
- Width: 1' - 3'
- Plant Spacing: 24"
- Foliage Color: Green
- Season of Interest: Summer
- Flower Color: Silver
- Water: Low
- Maintenance: Low
- Soil Requirement: Well-drained
- Environment: Full sun
- Tolerant: Drought, Deer

Culture

This ornamental grass is also called, "Silver Feather Grass." Many gardeners consider it to be one of the most attractive and graceful of all perennial ornamental grasses. From a sturdy base, spectacular flower spikes reach up to 20 inches with silk like streamers that trail in the breeze up to one foot. Even the lightest breeze will have these silver tails of *Stipa Barbata* shining in the breeze. It is also a very drought tolerant grass. A long time, garden-tested needlegrass from southern Europe with long, feathered seedheads that curl sinuously above the foliage, reflecting the low angled sunlight of a fall afternoon. A clumper, the blades grow to 2 ft by 2 ft, and the inflorescence (flowering stalk) to 3 ft. Sun, and not much summer water.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Everything that you could ask for in a grass with grace, beauty and fantastic form. A garden classic. Long smokey tails become the inflorescence on this beautiful plant. Tightly clumping and somewhat sparse growing at the base its true beauty is in bloom when wiry stems display long silken trailing tails. They wave and gently sway in the finest breath of a breeze. Their constant motion is mesmerizing in a garden. As the flowers mature they slowly twist in an effort to mature and then eventually take flight and literally wind themselves into the ground. This deserves a place in every garden in full sun and well-drained soil. Tolerant of great drought when established. Blooms appear in June and are effective through early August. Silver Feather Grass is one of the most graceful and curious of all perennial grasses. Seeds curl into crazy curled corkscrews making wild dried arrangements.

Problems

Generally, pest and disease free.

Garden Uses

Great for dried arrangements. Graceful accent plant for beds or borders, city or cottage gardens. Does well in containers. Cut back once to keep more compact.