

MEXICAN FEATHER GRASS

Nassella or Stipa tenuissima



Characteristics

- Type: Tender perennial
- Zone: 7-10
- Light: Sun, part sun
- Height: 12 - 24 Inches
- Spacing: 20 - 24 Inches
- Spread: 20 - 24 Inches
- Flower: Tan, Brown
- Flowers: Late Summer
- Foliage: Green
- Habit: Upright
- Maintenance: Easy
- Water: Drought resistant
- Native to North America
- May Be Aggressive

Culture

Beautiful grown in masses, this is a candidate for rock gardens, dry streambeds and next to landscape boulders. Grow as a single accent or in a small cluster among other drought- and heat-resistant perennials for unique color and texture variation. Excellent choice in Mexican ceramic pots for an artistic statement in Santa Fe-style garden. Delicate and graceful leaves and airy flower heads sway gently with the slightest breeze. Readily reseeds to naturalize in meadows or on slopes. Stipa has tan flowers on thin, bright green foliage in late summer. Provide a well-drained soil and water regularly during the first growing season to establish a deep, extensive root system. Reduce watering after establishment. Prune off or rake out dead foliage before new foliage emerges

Noteworthy Characteristics

Stipa is a neutral grass. Where temperatures get colder than 20 degrees F, the plants should be treated as annuals. Once the grass turns brown it can either be removed immediately or removed in the spring. It should not be expected to live through the winter and begin growing again in the spring. In areas where winter temperatures remain above 20 degrees it should be considered a perennial and the following information should be useful. Evergreen or neutral grasses are usually plants that look like grasses but aren't actually classified as grasses, they are generally called grass-like plants. Divide evergreen or neutral grasses and grass-like plants in spring only. Evergreen grasses don't ever go dormant. Dividing plants wounds them to some degree. For evergreen grasses this wounding will really affect their ability to live through the winter.

Problems

Mexican feathergrass often self-sows abundantly and may spread out of its designated place in the garden. It is an extremely vigorous grass, and can crowd pasture species as well as native grasses in coastal areas.

Garden Uses

This grass will beautify your garden all season. Combine with flowering plants or use in a rock garden or in containers.