Deer Grass

Muhlenbergia rigens



Deer Grass fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 3 feet

Flower Height: 5 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 6b

Description:

A native grass with fine green foliage; tall, airy plumes of silvery flowers in fall eventually fade to tan seed pods in late fall and winter; breathtaking planted in masses; evergreen in warmer climates

Ornamental Features

Deer Grass features airy plumes of silver flowers rising above the foliage from late summer to mid fall. The tan seed heads are carried on showy plumes displayed in abundance in late fall. Its grassy leaves remain green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Deer Grass is a dense herbaceous evergreen perennial grass with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Deer Grass is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Deer Grass will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity extending to 5 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for poor, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Deer Grass is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.