California Fescue

Festuca californica



California Fescue
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 3 feet

Flower Height: 4 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 7a

Description:

Drought tolerant once established, this selection produces beautiful mounds of fine textured, blue-gray grass-like foliage; excellent as a specimen or groundcover, or use in erosion control; low maintenance and easy to grow

Ornamental Features

California Fescue is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its interestingly mounded form. It has yellow flowers from late winter to mid spring. Its attractive grassy leaves remain bluish-green in color with hints of silvery blue throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

California Fescue is an herbaceous evergreen perennial grass with a mounded form. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

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.

California Fescue is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

California Fescue will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity extending to 4 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 8 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to dry locations, and dislikes excessive moisture. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. This plant does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

California Fescue is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used 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.