

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

CWEL Extension Fact Sheets

11-2009

Little Bluestem in the Landscape

Heidi Kratsch

Utah State University

Graham Hunter

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cwel_extension



Part of the [Horticulture Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kratsch, Heidi and Hunter, Graham, "Little Bluestem in the Landscape" (2009). *CWEL Extension Fact Sheets*. Paper 12.

https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cwel_extension/12

This Factsheet is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in CWEL Extension Fact Sheets by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usu.edu.



November 2007

HG/Native Plants/2007-01pr

Little Bluestem in the Landscape

Heidi Kratsch, Extension Ornamental Horticulture Specialist

Graham Hunter, Research Associate, Center for Water Efficient Landscaping

Schizachyrium scoparium

Little Bluestem



Description: Perennial, warm season bunchgrass; blue-green foliage turning bronze in the fall. Flowers in mid to late summer; heads are tufted racemes. Plants can reach heights of up to 4 feet. This plant can be found naturally in desert surroundings, along waterways, and in rock crevices. This is a long-living plant that can be used ornamentally as a specimen, in a rock garden, or anywhere soil stabilization is desired. In winter, the seeds are favored by small birds.

Cultural Requirements:

- Native habitat native all over the U.S. to prairies, dry hills, woodlands
- Soil well drained, low fertility, pH 5.0-8.4
- Cold Tolerance hardy to -38°F
- Drought Tolerance high
- Salt Tolerance not tolerant
- Sun/Shade Preference full sun
- Transplanting easy
- Propagation seed or division
- Maintenance crop to no less than 8 inches in early fall or late spring
- Pest Problems no serious pest problems

Landscape Value:

- Use in the Landscape specimen, soil stabilization, wildlife protection and food source
- Foliage showy, attractive fall color
- Inflorescence fine-textured

| | Apr | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct |
|---------|-----|-----|------|------|-----|------|-----|
| • Color | | | | | | | |

- Fruit (seedheads) feathery appearance when mature
- Form upright, tight, vertical lines
- Texture fine to medium
- Ultimate Size 3 to 4 feet
- Rate of Growth Moderate; full height in 2 years
- Plant Community parkland, pinyon-juniper, cool-desert shrub
- Availability "Utah's Choice" selection
- Cultivars 'Blaze': compact; intense pink-orange fall color; 'The Blues': intense blue leaf color

More Photos



Photo credits: Graham Hunter

References

Mee W., Barnes J., Kjelgren R., Sutton R., Cerny T., Johnson C. 2003. Waterwise: Native Plants for Intermountain Landscapes. Utah State University Press, Logan, UT.

USDA Plants Database. 2007. URL: <http://plants.usda.gov>.

Utah State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and older), disability, and veteran's status. USU's policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment and academic related practices and decisions.

Utah State University employees and students cannot, because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status, refuse to hire; discharge; promote; demote; terminate; discriminate in compensation; or discriminate regarding terms, privileges, or conditions of employment, against any person otherwise qualified. Employees and students also cannot discriminate in the classroom, residence halls, or in on/off campus, USU-sponsored events and activities.

This publication is issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Noelle Cockett, Vice President for Extension and Agriculture, Utah State University.