Little Bluestem in the Landscape

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Little Bluestem in the Landscape

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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, easy
- **Transplanting**: seed or division
- **Propagation**: crop to no less than 8 inches in early fall or late spring
- **Maintenance**: 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

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- Feathery appearance when mature
- Upright, tight, vertical lines
- Fine to medium
- 3 to 4 feet
- Moderate; full height in 2 years
- Parkland, pinyon-juniper, cool-desert shrub
- "Utah’s Choice" selection
- ‘Blaze’: compact; intense pink-orange fall color; ‘The Blues’: intense blue leaf color

**More Photos**

[Images of plants]

*Photo credits: Graham Hunter*

**References**


USDA Plants Database. 2007. URL: [http://plants.usda.gov](http://plants.usda.gov).

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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.