Bicknell's Sedge

Carex bicknellii



Bicknell's Sedge
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 30 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: Prairie Sedge, Copper-shouldered Sedge

Description:

A beautiful native grass with a rounded form, that thrives well in both dry and moist environments ; clumps of grassy, bright green foliage produce green flower spikes that mature into copper seed heads; easy to grow with little to no maintenance

Ornamental Features

Bicknell's Sedge is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The coppery-bronze seed heads are carried on showy plumes displayed in abundance from early to late summer. Its attractive glossy grassy leaves are lime green in color. The foliage often turns tan in fall. It features showy spikes of green flowers rising above the foliage from mid to late spring.

Landscape Attributes

Bicknell's Sedge is an open herbaceous 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Bicknell's Sedge is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Bicknell's Sedge will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 30 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. 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 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Bicknell's Sedge is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.