



Little Bluestem

Schizachyrium scoparium

Plant Description – Native, grass, deciduous, perennial

Height: 2 – 4 ft **Width/Spread:** 1.5 – 2 ft



Leaves

Shape: Linear

Arrangement: Alternate

Margin: Entire/Smooth

Form: Simple

Leaf Description: Leaves are green-gray with a bluish tint; thin, slender, and flat about 0.25 inches wide; sheath is glabrous and keeled; bronze-copper colored in the fall and remain this color throughout the winter

Flower/Bloom

Flower Color: Purple/Lavender

In Bloom: Jul-Oct

Flower Shape: Spike-like cluster

Flower Description: Purplish flowers are produced in pairs of spikelets arranged in an inflorescence; appear as a spike-like cluster located at the top of each branch; each cluster is 1-3 inches long



Fruits & Seeds

Spreads via: Seeds

Months in Seed: Fall

Seed Type: Fruit – Caryopsis (dry, one-seeded fruit)

Fruit and Seed Description: In the fall, the spikelet of flowers spreads out along with the hairs on the inflorescence, giving the seed head a silvery white, fuzzy appearance that is attractive to wildlife. The seed itself is a brownish purple spindle shaped seed that tapers to a point.

Ecological Benefits

Food source for butterflies, caterpillars (Crossline Skipper, Dusted Skipper, and Cobweb Skipper), and other birds

Maintenance Notes

Dormant in winter, but leaves remain copper colored with fuzzy seed-heads throughout the winter; Cut plant to the ground in late winter or early spring to promote new growth; Prefers dry soil (*water once per week*)