

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# Andropogon gerardii

## Big Bluestem



A tall, clump-forming grass, with blue-green foliage, turning rich bronze in fall. Also called turkeyfoot, because of its distinctive, three-forked seedheads. Remains standing throughout the winter. Big bluestem was one of the dominant grasses of the tallgrass prairie. Because of its height, best used as a single specimen plant, as a background plant, or in a naturalized setting. Its bronze color adds beautiful highlights to the winter garden. Don't fertilize it or it will flop over.

***Suggested companions:*** bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*), a wide variety of prairie flowers such as goldenrods (*Solidago* sp.), blazing stars (*Liatriis* sp.) and asters (*Aster* sp.)

Photo Credit: Sally Elmiger

Plant Type: Grass/Grasslike

Size: 4-9' H  
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Water Tolerant: Somewhat

Habitat:

Open field/ Prairie  
Wet Meadow

Soil: Average Garden Soil  
Clay  
Very Damp/Wet  
Sandy/ Gravelly

Exposure: sun

Flower Color:

Bloom Time:

Plant in:

Groundcover: No

Other Attributes:

Wildlife attracting  
Fall color  
Winter interest  
Butterfly attracting