



Prairie Dropseed

Sporobolus heterolepis

Grass Family (Poaceae)

Zones: 3-8

Full Sun

Low Water

Location: Amphitheater, Floral Walk, Fragrance Garden

Sporobolus heterolepis is a slow-growing, perennial prairie grass. It has its origin in Central North America. It grows to a height of 18-36 inches tall and 18-24 wide.

Prairie dropseed is a fine textured bunch grass. Its green to greenish-blue leaves emerge from the center tuft and gracefully arch outward. The seedheads appear in midsummer, in airy plumes tinted pink to brownish in color. Interestingly enough, they have a fragrance of popcorn and cilantro. Their color turns to pumpkin or brown color in the fall. Seedheads are nice to keep around during winter, as the snow does not flatten the plant, and the seedheads hold interest throughout winter.

These hardy grasses are drought tolerant, and the ideal planting locations are in full sun with rocky soil. Prairie Dropseed makes for a well defined and very distinctive border, or can be used in a meadow planting. They provide cover and food for wildlife. They are also a good use for erosion control as their fibrous roots extend out and help stabilize the soil.