Bear Grass

Nolina beldingii



Bear Grass
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 8 feet

Flower Height: 10 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 8a

Other Names: Nolina beldingi, Dasylirion beldingii

Description:

A large, slow growing succulent tree-like shrub with sea-green, sword-like leaves radiating from the center; mature rosettes produce a stalk of white flowers in spring; use as a focal accent

Ornamental Features

Bear Grass features bold spikes of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers rising above the foliage from mid to late spring. It has attractive bluish-green evergreen foliage. The sword-like leaves are highly ornamental and remain bluish-green throughout the winter. The rough bark and brown branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Bear Grass is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Bear Grass is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Bear Grass will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity extending to 10 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 8 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Bear Grass makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.