

ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH443



PENNISETUM

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Fountain Grass
- Scientific name: *Pennisetum sp.*
- Native to eastern Asia and Australia
- Perennial grass growing in clumps 2-4' high and 2-4' wide
- Some species are grown as annuals in cold climates
- Narrow, flat, linear leaves 0.5'' wide and up to 20'' long
- Flower spikes are carried in bristly yellow cylinders 8'' long
- Blooms from late June until frost
- Mounds of foliage turn golden brown in winter
- Hardy in zones 5-11 (depending on the species)

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows well in full sun or partial shade
- Prefers moist, well-drained media
- Requires supplemental water in arid climates

PROPAGATION

- Propagate by division of the root clump during the dormant season
- Space new plants 2-3' apart

DISORDERS

- No serious pest or disease problems

CONSUMER CARE

- Cut plants back in early spring before new growth begins
 - Best presented in masses as part of a border
 - Flower spikes are often used in arrangements
 - Wide-leaved cultivars such as 'Moudry' are invasive and should be avoided
- 'Hameln': fine textured foliage, cream colored panicles
 - 'Little Bunny': miniature form with tan bottlebrush panicles
 - *Pennisetum orientale*
 - 'Karley Rose': rose-purple panicles

References

http://www.floridata.com/ref/P/penn_alo.cfm

<http://www.bluestem.ca/pennisetum-orientale.htm>

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Pennisetum alopecuroides*