

Stipa - Growing Guide

Growing Stipa

Spear grass, Needle grass, Feather grass

Stipa are the most superb ornamental grasses both for the shrub border (*S. gigantea* especially) and for the herbaceous border. They are often at their most effective when grown en masse in a border devoted just to ornamental grasses which come into their own in the early frosts in November. Their inflorescences can be cut and also dried for varied flower arrangements and as Christmas dried flower arrangements.

Stipa are fully hardy grasses which grow well in medium or light well drained soil. Deciduous species (*S. tenuissima*) need to be cut back in early winter to tidy them up ready for the next season. Evergreen species (*S. arundinacea*, *S. gigantea*) need a tidy up in early spring to remove dead leaves and flower heads. All Stipa are easily propagated by dividing up clumps in spring to create healthy new plants.

S. arundinacea, pheasant tail grass (also known as *Anemanthele lessoniana*), produces pendant panicles of 30in long purplish green spikelets or flower heads. These tufted, rhizomatous perennials can make excellent specimen or feature plants. If used in this way some plant supports may be needed for the inflorescences.



Stipa arundinacea

S. gigantea, giant feather grass or golden oats, can eventually form clumps



Stipa gigantea



Stipa gigantea



Stipa gigantea &
Euphorbia pasteurii



Stipa tenuissima



Stipa tenuissima



Stipa tenuissima



Stipa tenuissima &
Euphorbia wulfeni



Stipa tenuissima &
Phyllostachys aureosculata 'Spectabilis'

Burncoose Nurseries: Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ

Telephone: +44 (0) 1209 860316 Fax: +44 (0) 1209 860011 Email: info@burncoose.co.uk

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