BURNCOOSE NURSERIES PART OF THE CAERHAYS ESTATE

Uncinia uncinata - Growing Guide

Growing Uncinia Uncinata

Hook sedge, hook grass

Uncinia are tufted grasses from New Zealand which Burncoose has been importing from there as small plug liners for decades. Uncinia uncinata is a densely tufted perennial grass with rigid upright stems and flattish rough margined leaves which are pale brown to reddish brown in appearance. Its leaves grow about 10-12in tall with a roughly similar spread to an individual clump.

With such colourful leaves this is an ornamental grass to edge the front of a border or in a gravel bank. They can feature well as under planting in a pot beneath a single stemmed small tree or even on their own in a decorative pot. Anywhere to show the leaf colour to best effect.

In the wild this plant is found in damp, tussocky grassland where it can become mat forming. It will tolerate short periods of real cold (say -10°) and a bit of scorching to the leaves in such situations causes no long term harm.

To keep the colour in the leaves these plants are best grown in full sun in fertile, rich soils which remain damp but well drained especially in winter. That is not to say that they are particularly demanding.

The flowers are dark brown in narrow spikes of about 6in in length in mid and late summer. The male flowers are at the top of the spike with the female flowers underneath. Female flowers go on to produce nutlike fruits. These seeds can be sown in spring or the clumps can be lifted and divided with a sharp blade at the same sort of time of the year.

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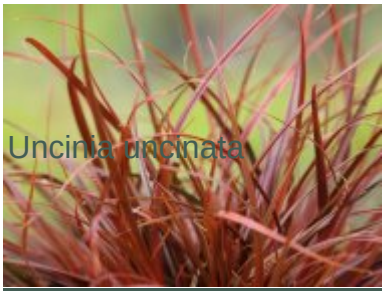
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