Californian Blue-Eyed Grass

Sisyrinchium bellum



Californian Blue-Eyed Grass flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 8 inches

Flower Height: 12 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 7a

Other Names: Western Blue-eyed Grass

Description:

A variety of blue-eyed grass native to the west coast; valuable in the rock garden as well as edging in the border; metallic purple-blue flowers with yellow centers from late winter into spring; will naturalize in open areas

Ornamental Features

Californian Blue-Eyed Grass has masses of beautiful purple star-shaped flowers with blue overtones and lemon yellow eyes at the ends of the stems from late winter to late spring, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its glossy narrow leaves remain bluish-green in color throughout the season.



Californian Blue-Eyed Grass in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Californian Blue-Eyed Grass is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Californian Blue-Eyed Grass is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Californian Blue-Eyed Grass will grow to be about 8 inches tall at maturity extending to 12 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Californian Blue-Eyed Grass is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers against which the larger thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.