

Hakonechloa macra 'Aureola'
Commonly known as Japanese Forest Grass

Hardiness - Zone 5



Family - Poacea

One of the deciduous rhizomatus, clump-forming, perennial grasses native to wooded and mountainous areas of Japan.

Cultivation - This grass prefers fertile, moist but well drained soil. It can be grown in full sun to partial shade. I have found that it grows well in an easterly oriented site where it gets morning sun and shade from the intense heat of the day. It will grow in full sun but should be well mulched as it does not grow as well under dry conditions. I find intense sun conditions also tend to bleach out it beautiful color somewhat. More shaded conditions have the opposite effect, with the grass taking on a more overall green color. The easterly siting is just right to emphasis it's bright yellow leaves with a green stripe.

Characteristics

It's clump forming draping and flowing habit makes it a well behaved, essentially carefree addition to any garden of mixed perennials or of ornamental grasses. It also works well in containers

Personal Observation

It's gold tones in the garden companion very well with burgandy foliage plants such as heucheras and japanese painted ferns. It is also attractive with blue toned hostas.

I like to use this grass as a front of the border high interest plant. It's lovely flowing, mid-size(12-14") clump makes it ideal for layering in front of taller perennials and grasses.

The foliage and the spiklet blooms of this grass are extremely attractive in the garden from May to December. It's leaves take on a reddish tinge going into the fall.

I like to leave ornmental grasses in the garden to provide winter interest as the wind rustles through or the snow drapes over them. Two winters ago red backed voles built their nest in the center and then munched on it's roots all winter. I lost two beautiful clumps as well as other plants that winter due to a proliferationof these pests.

Now I wait until mid December or just prior to the first snowfall and cut the grass back so as not to encourage any more nesting and winter food supply.
This grass has earned top marks from me as a beautiful garden staple.

Janet Elsie Zone 5b East Bay, N.S.