



BOTHRIOCHLOA BARBINODIS (ANDROPOGON GERARDII) BIG BLUESTEM, TURKEY FOOT

Early settlers christened this big grass Turkey foot, for its distinctive three-pronged seed head. Big bluestem is widespread throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico, and was a dominant grass in the prairies of the Midwest. This clumping grass provides a strong vertical form in the landscape, growing quickly to 6 to 8 feet tall by 3 to 4 feet wide. During the warm months, the ½-inch-wide leaves are a lush blue-green color, changing to a striking coppery-red color as the temperatures cool. Silvery seed heads add a final adornment in the fall months. Durable and long-lived, Big bluestem is not fussy about soils, temperature extremes, or moisture. Since it can tolerate slightly waterlogged conditions, it would be ideal for retention basin plantings. Its large stature makes it an ideal background grass for meadow gardens. Big bluestem is hardy to -20° F. USDA Zone 5.

AT A GLANCE SUMMARY

SIZE (H X W)	6-8 feet x 3-4 feet
FLOWER COLOR	Red
FLOWER SEASON	Late summer
EXPOSURE	Full sun to part shade
WATER	Low
GROWTH RATE	Moderate
HARDINESS	-20° F, USDA Zone 5
PRUNING	Cut back in late winter



GRASS