



NEW NATIVE LITTLE BLUESTEMS

*Bodie Pennisi, Carol Robacker,
Melanie Harrison, and Maria Putzke*



Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) is a drought tolerant, low maintenance native plant. This ornamental, warm season perennial grass tolerates a wide range of soil conditions and is easily grown. Its purplish bronze blooms and vertical clusters of slender leaves make it a lovely addition to any landscape. It is cold hardy in Georgia, although it may suffer moderate damage in cold winters in the North Georgia mountains. Dr. Carol Robacker of the University of Georgia and Dr. Melanie Harrison of the United States Department of Agriculture have recently created new Little Bluestem cultivars with improved form, reduced height, and more intense red or blue foliage. Several of these desirable new plants are now available to the landscape industry and the public!

The following are the newest Little Bluestems, all in the process of being patented. This new 'Hit Parade' series of Little Bluestem cultivars includes 'Cinnamon Girl,' 'Good Vibrations,' and 'Seasons in the Sun.'

'Cinnamon Girl' sports exquisite purplish-red foliage.



‘Cinnamon Girl’ has graceful, soft-arching foliage and upright flowering culms that are a stunning red-purple in the spring, changing to a soft yellow-green. Its leaf color changes from greyed-purple and greyed-orange to yellow-green and red-purple over the course of the warm season. Its foliage grows to 4 feet and cascades in the summer, unlike other Little Bluestems on the market, which remain upright throughout the warm season. This gives ‘Cinnamon Girl’ a more rounded appearance, appearing as tall as it is wide.

‘Good Vibrations’ shows off its striking upright rounded form and delicate purple foliage.



‘Good Vibrations’ is equally impressive, with an upright growth habit in early summer that becomes softly arching by late June or early July. It is slightly shorter than ‘Cinnamon Girl,’ growing to just over 3 feet. Unlike other Little Bluestems, which have mostly green-blue foliage, ‘Good Vibrations’ displays lovely cascading greens and greyed- and red-purples throughout the summer season. Like ‘Cinnamon Girl,’ ‘Good Vibrations’ has a visually appealing upright rounded form, appearing as tall as it is wide.

‘Seasons in the Sun’ has beautiful greyed-purple foliage, sure to impress all summer long.



‘Seasons in the Sun’ grows to a height of just over 3.5 feet. Its upright culm exhibits a fine red-purple, and its delicately arching foliage is a lovely greyed-purple with a greyed-green underside. Its colorful, flowing foliage remains from spring through fall. Unlike other Little Bluestems on the market, which have greater width than height, ‘Seasons in the Sun’ has an attractive upright rounded form.

Be the envy of your neighborhood by planting one or all of these native Little Bluestem cultivars and get a reliable performance in the sweltering Georgia summers!

extension.uga.edu