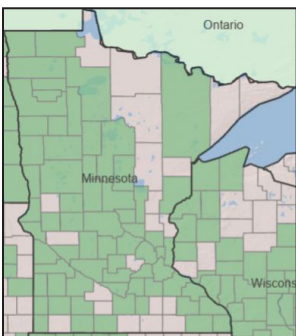


Junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*)

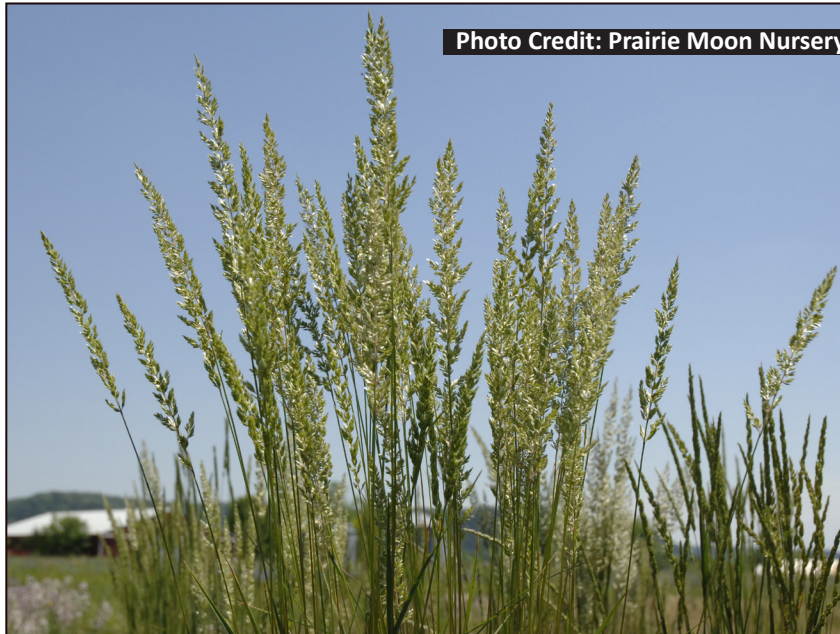
Family: Grass
(Poaceae)

DESCRIPTION: One of the first prairie plants to emerge in spring, perennial Junegrass' clumps of narrow leaves are soon followed by stout, cylindrical flower clusters that persist through summer. The grass is native to dry prairies, oak savannas and forest openings. Its early emergence and distinctive appearance make Junegrass easy to recognize in the landscape.

USES: Junegrass is used in prairie restorations, uplands bordering shoreline restorations and native plant gardens. This bunch-forming grass spreads slowly by seed, and is suitable for gardens where a neat appearance is desired. Pollinated by wind, Junegrass shelters beneficial insects that prey on pests. Wildlife feed on its seeds.



Range Map Credit: NRCS
Plants Database



Planting Recommendations

Junegrass grows best in sandy or rocky soils and in full sun. Seeds can be scattered in the fall or stored in a refrigerator over winter, and then broadcast in spring. Soil should barely cover the seeds. Keeping seedlings watered and lightly shaded protects them against drought. Potted Junegrass can be planted at any time, spaced about 12 inches apart. Both seeds and plants are widely available from native plant nurseries. Because Junegrass cannot compete with

taller, faster-growing plants, be sure to remove weeds and other dominating plants from the area. Junegrass will self-seed but is not considered aggressive. The grass generally stays green until mid-summer, and then turns brown and goes dormant. Its spear-like clusters of flowers remain, providing an attractive low to medium-height border in gardens. Good companion plants include large-flowered penstemon, pasqueflower, prairie smoke and little bluestem.

STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS:
None

ID: Clumps of green to gray-green, smooth to finely hairy leaves emerge in early spring and grow up to 6 inches long. Light to medium green branching clusters appear in June, later contracting into erect clusters that turn brown. Spikelets separate above the glume and commonly bear two florets. Lance-shaped, pointed glumes and lemmas are 0.10 to 0.20 inch long with stiff hairs along a keel. Plants grow up to 20 inches tall.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Prairie wedgegrass (*Sphenopholis obtusata*) and slender wedgegrass (*Sphenopholis intermedia*) grow up to 4 feet tall. Slender wedgegrass has nodding spikes and prefers wetter habitats. Wedgegrass glumes and lemmas are smooth with rounded tips, the first glume narrower and the second wider than Junegrass. Spikelets separate below the glumes, often preceded by the upper floret.

Developed by Susan Nelson, a botanist with more than 40 years of experience studying Midwest flora, and author/curator of [Larkspur Plant Resources](#)

REFERENCES:

[Xerces Society](#)
[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[Illinois Wildflowers](#)
[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#)

