

# Indian Grass: *Sorghastrum nutans*



**Cultivation:** The preference is full to partial sun and slightly moist to dry conditions. Various kinds of soil are tolerated, including those that can loam, clay-loam, sand, and gravel. Most growth and development occurs during the warm weather of summer because of the C4 metabolism of this grass. It can spread aggressively in some situations (e.g., prairie restorations). Habitats include savannas and sandy savannas, black soil prairies, clay prairies, sand prairies, gravel prairies, dolomite prairies, hill pr airies, cemetery prairies, barrens with scrubby vegetation, limestone glades, grassy fens, fallow fields, roadsides, and areas along railroads (particularly where prairie remnants occur). Indian Grass is often used in tallgrass prairie restorations. The foliage is also palatable to hoofed mammalian herbivores, including bison and cattle. Because of its height and tendency to remain erect, it provides good cover for many kinds of birds and animals in prairies.

**Plant Structure:** This native perennial grass is 3-7' tall and unbranched. It typically consists of tight bunches of flowering culms and their leaves. The blooming period occurs during late summer to early fall. At this time, the branchlets of the panicle spread outward slightly; afterwards, they become more appressed and ascending. The root system is fibrous and has short rhizomes.