



Chinese Silvergrass

Miscanthus sinensis Anders.

Common Names: Chinese silvergrass, Eulalia, zebra grass

Native Origin: China, Japan and Korea

Description: A highly variable robust perennial grass that can grow to 5 to 10 feet in height. It is usually found in large tufts. The branches are very flexible and spread or droop. The leaves are elongate and can measure 3 feet in length and 1 inch across. The leaves have a silver white midrib. The tips of the leaves are sharp and re-curving. The fan-shaped terminal panicle is 6 to 24 inches long and can be silvery to pale pink in color. The branches of the panicle are erect or ascending. These panicles reach full maturity in the fall. The glabrous spikelets are very small, yellow-brown in color and encircled at the base with white or purple-colored hairs. The fertile lemma contains an awn that is spirally twisted at its base. Chinese silvergrass reproduce through rhizomes however seeds may be dispersed mechanically or through wind.



Habitat: It prefers full sun and moist, rich soil that drains well. Slight drought can be tolerated once plants are established. Plants tolerate cold climates but do not grow well in hot, humid southern climates. Horticulturists claim it can be grown in zones 5-9, i.e. it can tolerate winter temperatures as low as -26°C (-15°F), and can survive as far south as the Florida panhandle. It has been located along disturbed areas that had been burned or cut.



Distribution: This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in CT, DC, GA, IL, IN, KY, MD, NC, NJ, PA, SC, TN, VA, and WI.

Ecological Impacts: It has escaped from older ornamental plantings. It forms extensive infestations along roadsides, forest margins, and disturbed sites. It is highly flammable and a fire hazard.

Control and Management: The ability of Chinese silvergrass to sprout from pieces of rhizome makes control difficult. The whole underground rhizome system must be killed in order to prevent regrowth the next year.

- **Manual-** Digging out plants will probably result in resprouts and would need follow-up treatments. Similarly, disking and cutting methods may spread rhizome pieces into clean areas.
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate or imazapyr. Follow label and state requirements.

References: www.forestryimages.org, <http://webapps.lib.uconn.edu/ipane>, <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/moredocs/missin01.html>, <http://plants.usda.gov>, Miller, James H., Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests: A Field Guide for Identification and Control, USDA FS SRS-62, p. 54-55.