

PANICUM VIRGATUM L.

‘HEAVY METAL’



Fam. Poaceae

DESCRIPTION

It has a conspicuous erect and columnar habit; it is formed by numerous thin and cylindrical stems, covered with long drooping leaves.

LEAVES

Glaucous-bluish metallic leaves, linear, narrow with a pointed apex; in summer they take on purple-violet tones on the tops.

HABITAT

Native to the United States, it is spontaneously widespread in tropical regions and in those with a temperate climate.

DISTRIBUTION

In Italy, it is grown for ornamental purposes as a houseplant and in gardens for its highly decorative blue-silvery foliage.

FLOWERS

Bundled in showy and well-ramified golden panicle inflorescences that persist even in winter, this type of switchgrass blooms from August to September (up to October if the weather is mild).

SEEDS

Small, dark and oblong seeds that remain on the stems for most of the winter; many wild birds feed on them.

STEM

Thin and cylindrical.

INTERESTING FACTS

The gardens of the Venaria Reale house the variety *Panicum Virgatum* ‘Heavy Metal’ which has a particular ornamental function thanks to the ears that keep their erect habit also in winter, supporting the frost that forms small water crystals resulting in a spectacular visual effect.

ROOTS

Robust rhizomatous fasciculated root that holds the plant firmly anchored to the ground.