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Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax

Phormium tenax 'Tom Thumb'

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 20 inches

Sunlight: ☉ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

A smaller dwarf variety that has large sword-like leaves that emerge gray-green and mature to copper; beautiful and eye catching as an accent in the garden or massed along borders; also a great center for a mixed container

Ornamental Features

Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax is primarily valued in the garden for its ornamental globe-shaped form. Its attractive large sword-like leaves emerge grayish green in spring, turning coppery-bronze in color the rest of the year.

Landscape Attributes

Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax is an open herbaceous annual with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



*Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax
foliage*

Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



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Planting & Growing

Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 20 inches apart. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Tom Thumb New Zealand Flax is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.