This fall, if you have plans to enhance the shady areas of your garden, don’t forget all the wonderful shade-loving native sedges available. They add great texture and color variation to your garden. Listed below are three examples of sedges that work well in shade and woodland areas.

The first sedge on our list is a great choice for a low-maintenance lawn or groundcover in shade conditions. Broadleaf Sedge, (*Carex platyphylla*) is a clump-forming sedge with distinct broad, pleated leaves up to an inch or more wide. Broadleaf sedge can spread slowly to form a nice textured groundcover and typically does not exceed 8-12 inches in height. Once established, this sedge can tolerate dry, shady conditions.

If you are thinking of creating a rain garden in a shady location or the shady spot in your garden stays moist, the Blue and Cherokee Sedges are perfect candidates. Blue Sedge, (*Carex glaucodea*) is grown in part to full shade and prefers moist to medium soil. It most often is clump forming and does not exceed 1 to 2 feet in height. The broad leaves are an attractive and unique blue green color. Like the Blue Sedge, Cherokee Sedge (*Carex cherokeensis*), prefers part shade to full shade and thrives in moist to medium soil conditions. It typically does not get taller than 12 inches in height and is clump forming. The deep green leaves are fine-textured and grass-like adding great texture to a shade garden. Both of these sedges also work well as an accent or border in woodland or shade gardens.
If your yard is sunny, three low-growing natives can be used to create a ground cover or provide an accent in your garden: Fox Sedge, Little Bluestem, and Autumn Bentgrass. The fibrous root systems of these natives help hold the soil in place and prevent erosion from occurring. All three species require very little additional watering and no fertilizers or pesticides are needed to keep these natives healthy.

Fox Sedge (Carex vulpinoidea) is a graceful, fine textured sedge that grows 1-3 ft tall. The emerald green leaves are narrow and form a nice clump of golden brown color in fall and winter. The seedheads resemble a reddish brown fox’s tail, giving the species its name. This sedge is good in rain gardens or moist soil. It will naturalize and may require some weeding to keep it in its place.

Little Bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium) grows from 18 inches to 3 feet tall and has a wide range of colors combining various shades of blue, green, and purple. In the fall the stems are purplish at the base and the foliage turns shades of deep vibrant reds. In late summer through early fall, wispy, fluffy, silvery seed heads decorate the stems. Little Bluestem is extremely cold hardy, drought tolerant, deer resistant and tolerates poor soils well. Its fibrous roots grow almost vertically downward to depths comparable to shade trees! It is also an important food plant for various tiny butterflies and provides forage for many songbirds throughout winter.

Autumn Bentgrass (Agrostis perennans) is a native grass that hasn't been used often for landscaping, but it makes a nice garden accent. It can adapt to a fairly broad range of growing conditions - tolerating full sun to light shade, moist to dry conditions, and rocky or clay soil. Its dark green foliage grows to reach an average height of 3' and blooms in July. A number of caterpillars feed on the foliage and the seeds are eaten by a variety of birds and mammals.

All of the species listed in this article are known to be deer resistant and all produce seeds that entice wildlife through the fall and winter. With all sedges and grasses it is best to cut back the foliage in late winter before the new growth of spring.
Seed Packets are available now for fall planting

Species available include: Swamp Hibiscus, Eastern Bluestar, False Blue Indigo, Purple Prairie Clover, and Foxglove Beardtongue.

Contact us for a list of all available seed.

Look! The cranes are here! Did you know a group of cranes is called a sedge of cranes? Did you know they can stand around in sedges? Did you know...

I know, I know.
Dropseed Nursery Fall Plant Sale
1205 S. Buckeye Lane, Goshen, KY

September 14, 21 and 28
9 am – 4 pm

Come by and see our new selections and familiar favorites!

Cash and Checks only, please
Visit our website for directions to the nursery: http://www.dropseednursery.com
Or call Margaret at 502-439-9033