

Miscanthus—

(Continued from Page 25)

seedlings will be noticed, removed or enjoyed. When a large planting of Miscanthus including several cultivars or kinds is planted along a highway, natural area, or in landscapes where self-seeding can go unnoticed, potential problems exist.

Miscanthus Sacchariflorus

This rhizomatous species is very cold hardy, even in USDA Zone 2. Locally this species is often referred to as "pampas grass." Although large colonies of this grass are found along roadsides in many counties in Iowa, and to a limited extent in Minnesota, this species sets very little or no seed. Over the years, the diameter of the colony can increase, but it can be controlled with regular mowing during the growing season or glyphosate applied to 6-12" of green actively growing tissue. This species is not as ornamental due to the aggressive rhizomes, and because of this, many nurseries do not sell this plant.

Miscanthus x Giganteus

The giant Miscanthus has been researched extensively in Europe as a biomass fuel source. Flowers appear in October, however and the blooms may not form in colder, (USDA Zones 4 or 5) climates. These flowers are male sterile and even when grown with other species, this form has not been known to set any seed.

From an invasive standpoint, giant Miscanthus appears to be of little risk. This species is hardy in USDA Zone 3 in most winters. Because of its size, it makes a good screen, or a maze for children's gardens.

Recommendations

Should you continue to plant Miscanthus? DO NOT PLANT the species Miscanthus sinensis. Plant only vegetative propagated cultivars that have shown little evidence of self-seeding in your area. See <http://horticulture.coafes.umn.edu/miscanthus/recommendations.htm> for further recommendations.

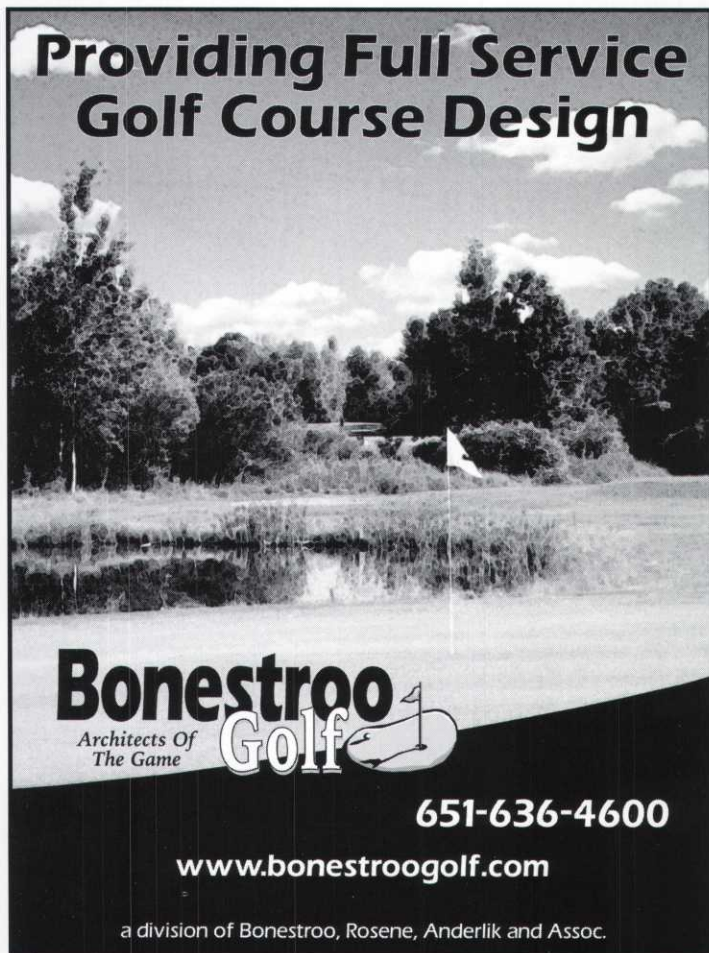
Watch for Seedlings!

If you have Miscanthus on your grounds or golf course, be on the lookout for seedlings in beds nearby or new plants appearing where you did not plant them. Remove all seedlings.

Will Miscanthus Be the Next Invasive Plant in Minnesota?

I doubt it. For one thing we are much more aware of invasive plant problems and on the lookout for potential self-seeding plants. Secondly, Miscanthus seeds still may not develop before a fall frost in our climate. Newer, early flowering cultivars pose the biggest threat and should be watched carefully.

In conclusion, Miscanthus sinensis cultivars should only be planted in managed landscapes where they can be watched and controlled for self-seeding. How quickly or much further Miscanthus will spread in the United States is difficult to predict. As responsible horticulturists, we must be aware of potentially invasive plants, open to communication about these issues, and play a role in the education of the gardening public.



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U OF M TURF AND GROUNDS FIELD DAY SET FOR JULY 29

The University of Minnesota Turf and Grounds Field Day will be held on July 29, 2004 at the TROE Center on the St. Paul campus. This is an excellent opportunity to see first hand the types of research projects being conducted by University faculty. The following are examples of research projects which will be showcased during the morning field day:

- + Pesticide runoff from bentgrass fairways
- + Use of colonial bentgrasses and fine fescues on golf course fairways
- + Nitrogen leaching and gas emissions from fertilizers applied to a USGA putting green as effected by irrigation inputs
- + National Turfgrass Evaluation Program
- + Perennial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass breeding nurseries
- + Using remote sensors to help conserve irrigation water
- + Fertilizer runoff from Kentucky bluegrass
- + No-mow grasses and alternative plant species

These are examples of the types of projects that you can see at field day on July 29, 2004. Following field day, we will offer a phosphorus fertilizer training program for golf personnel and other exciting educational opportunities.

— Brian Horgan
Extension Turfgrass Specialist, University of Minnesota