



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Cyperus albostriatus*¹

Edward F. Gilman²

Introduction

Ideally suited to water gardens or poolside plantings, the compact clumps of Dwarf Umbrella Sedge are also attractive in containers or as striking specimen plantings in landscape soil (Fig. 1). They can be spaced 1 to 2 feet apart in a mass planting to create a 2-foot-tall ground cover of fine texture. The small, curving tufts of flower bracts look like leaves and radiate out from the top of the bare, slender, triangular stalks, like the ribs of an umbrella.

General Information

Scientific name: *Cyperus albostriatus*

Pronunciation: sye-PEER-us al-boe-stree-AY-tus

Common name(s): Dwarf Umbrella Sedge

Family: *Cyperaceae*

Plant type: herbaceous; ornamental grass

USDA hardiness zones: 8B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; border; water garden; accent

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: .5 to 1 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet



Figure 1. Dwarf Umbrella Sedge.

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

Foliage

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf arrangement: most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: semi-evergreen

Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: green

Flower characteristic: year-round flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit cover: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: not applicable

Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; extended flooding; loam;

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: aggressive, spreading plant

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Growing in a wide variety of soils, including standing water, Umbrella Sedge performs well in sun or light shade, and is slightly salt-tolerant. Regular fertilizer applications keep the foliage dark green. Growth is moderate and Umbrella Sedge could eventually take over a small pond, spreading by seed and underground stems, which can be mostly controlled by submerging the plants in pots. They spread slowly in landscape soil.

Bent or brown stalks should be periodically removed and overgrown clumps divided, discarding the matted center part of the plants. This helps keep the plant look clean in the landscape.

The cultivar 'Gracilis', Dwarf Umbrella Sedge, is also much smaller than the species. *Cyperus papyrus*, Egyptian papyrus, reaches 6 to 8 feet in height, has finer, almost thread-like "leaves" (which are actually flower bracts) and makes an excellent water garden plant, being found in its native habitat in Africa growing in quietly flowing water up to 3 feet deep.

New plantlets can be propagated by division or by inverting the flower head in a shallow container of water or moist sand.

Umbrella Sedge is occasionally bothered by mites.

Pests and Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.