

# Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants

Best Bets: Plants  
for Particular Uses  
in the Mid-Atlantic

## INVASIVE PLANT: Chinese Silver Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*)



This densely-bunched grass was introduced to the United States from Asia for ornamental purposes in the late 1800s. Today some 50 forms are sold in the nursery trade, and it is often used in both commercial and residential landscapes. Unfortunately, it escapes from these plantings and has become invasive in national parks in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. It is listed as an invasive species in Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia.

Problems	Chinese Silver Grass & Indian Grass
Invades roadsides, rights-of-way, clearings, fields, and meadows	
Outcompetes and crowds out native vegetation	
Little wildlife value	
Colonizes by wind-dispersed seed	
Seeds build up in soil seed banks	
Spreads also through rhizomes	
Small bits of rhizome can start new plants	
Hybrids from infertile cultivars can revert back to aggressive wild type	
Highly flammable, may become a fire hazard	
<b>Desired Characteristics</b>	
Grass with vertical and winter interest	
<b>Native Alternatives</b>	
<a href="#"><i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i> (River Oats)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Elymus hystrix</i> (Bottlebrush Grass)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Panicum virgatum</i> (Switchgrass)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> (Little Bluestem)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Sorghastrum nutans</i> (Indian Grass)</a>	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by Elaine Mills, Sunny Garden and Meadowlark Botanical Gardens