

Sisyrinchium inflatum

Common names: grass widows, blue eyed grass, purple eyed grass



Grass widows are one of the first flowers that bloom in the spring. It is found in early spring, in moist conditions from the sagebrush steppe of Eastern Washington to the open ponderosa pine forests of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. Depending on the site, grass widows will bloom starting in late March to May. In Moscow, Idaho, grass widows are usually in bloom during the month of April. Each plant has bright purple to bluish (sometimes white) bowl-shaped

flowers that bloom on flattened stems with clumps of grass-like leaves. The flowers are borne singly or in small clusters. They rise from short rhizomes and fibrous roots. Mature height ranges from 6 to 18 inches. Fruits are round capsules.



Use in the landscape: Grass widows are a beautiful spring wild flower that is perfect for the garden. This plant will look great in a rock garden, below deciduous trees to a wildflower meadow. Plants require full sun to light shade, with moist spring conditions and drier summer conditions.

Propagation: Grass widows grow easily from seed given a cold moist stratification (winter) and cool germinating temperatures (spring). It does take several years for the plant to flower from seed. Harvest seeds in July or August when seed heads are dry by picking dry seed heads that are almost open. It may be difficult to find these plants in the summer after they have turned brown and are covered by other plants. Sow in fall and transplant in the fall.



References

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