

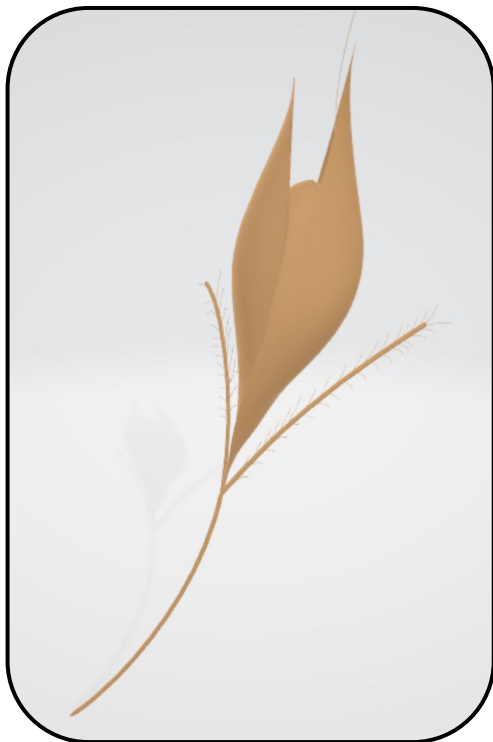
Indiangrass

(Sorghastrum nutans)

Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) is a tall grass that grows to 3-8 feet in height and has upright clumps of broad blue-green blades and branched flower clusters that lasts from late summer to early winter. Its florets are cross-pollinated by the wind. Indiangrass is a warm season perennial grass, doing most of its growing in the summer and returning for multiple growing seasons. This grass is an important component of the tallgrass prairies which were once predominant in the Midwest. It is also commonly found in meadows and naturalized areas creating an environment supportive of wildlife, especially songbirds and gamebirds.



Photo credit: Soil, Crop, and More Information



Indiangrass is tolerant of a wide range of soils and harsh conditions, so it is planted on slopes to control erosion and it is a common source of food for livestock. At the Danforth Center, this is of interest to researchers studying the dispersal of spikelets as they are blown by the wind. Such research aims to help increase crop productivity and adaptability to promote food security and stability. One fun fact is that the genus name *Sorghastrum* is of Greek origin and means a poor imitation of sorghum.

This 3D model was made using Fusion 360. A reference image of an Indian grass spikelet was used to trace the structure. After initial sketches were made, they were extruded up and colored for the final result.



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