



**North Carolina
Native Plant Society**
ncwildflower.org

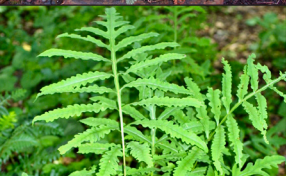
Favorite Ferns for NC Gardens

Native species are those that occur naturally in an area. They are better adapted to local conditions requiring less care once established. When you create a native garden in your yard, you help sustain native plants and wildlife. Introduced plants do not provide the food and cover our native wildlife depend on and may become invasive, outcompeting the natives.

The native ferns below are all perennials and should return each year if planted properly. (All ferns require part sun to shade unless otherwise noted.) They are available commercially but if your local nursery does not sell these native plants—encourage them to do so!

Common Name	Scientific Name	Image	Region*	Comment	Soil	Features
Southern Maidenhair	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>		P/C	Delicate texture, the fronds blend together and fill in well with wildflowers and along edges.	Average	Spreads slowly 12–18" tall
Northern Maidenhair	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>		M/P	Distinctive horseshoe shaped fronds with thin black stipes provide elegant, delicate texture. In Piedmont, provide compost and consistent moisture.	Average to moist	Spreads slowly 1–2.5 ft tall
New York Fern	<i>Amauropelta noveboracensis</i>		M/P/C	Delicate, tapering brittle fronds grow in evenly spaced colonies. Spreads rapidly, especially in mountains or with consistent moisture.	Average	Spreads 1–2 ft tall
Southern Lady Fern	<i>Athyrium asplenoides</i>		M/P/C	Easy to grow and tolerant of part sun if well-watered. Some have striking red stipes.	Average	Clumps 2–3 ft tall
Silvery Glade Fern	<i>Deparia acrostichoides</i>		M/P	Easy to grow and tolerant of part sun. Once established it is somewhat drought tolerant.	Average	Clumps 1–3 ft tall
Dixie Woodfern	<i>Dryopteris australis</i>		M/P/C	Semi-evergreen, tall and stately with vigorous growth. Once established tolerant of part sun (with consistent moisture) or drought (in shade).	Average to moist	Clumps 3–5 ft tall
Fancy Fern	<i>Dryopteris intermedia</i>		M/P	Evergreen, with light green delicately textured fronds forming a symmetrical, funnel-like clump.	Average	Clumps 1–2 ft tall

* M = Mountains, P = Piedmont, C = Coast

Common Name	Scientific Name	Image	Region*	Comment	Soil	Features
Marginal Woodfern	<i>Dryopteris marginalis</i>		M/P	Evergreen leathery leaves form a neat, handsome clump. Drought tolerant once-established.	Average to well-drained	Clumps 1–2 ft tall
Netted Chain Fern	<i>Lorinseria areolata</i> [= <i>Woodwardia areolata</i>]		M/P/C	Delicate, tapering brittle fronds grow in evenly spaced colonies. Spreads rapidly, especially in mountains or with consistent moisture.	Average	Spreads 1–2 ft tall
Hairy Lip Fern	<i>Myriopteris lanosa</i> [= <i>Cheilanthes lanosa</i>]		M/P/C	Preferring some sun and very well-drained soil, they grow well in gritty crevices. Unique, fuzzy fronds.	Well-drained	Spreads slowly 6–12" tall
Sensitive Fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>		M/P/C	Distinctive light green fronds with well-spaced lobes and brown fertile fronds like beaded stalks. Tolerates some sun. Spreads vigorously.	Average-moist-wet	Spreads 1–3 ft tall
Cinnamon Fern	<i>Osmundastrum cinnamomeum</i>		M/P/C	Robust, large fronds form neat clump with cinnamon-colored fertile fronds in center in spring. Tolerates part sun (when consistently watered).	Moist	Clumps 3–5 ft tall
Royal Fern	<i>Osmunda spectabilis</i>		M/P/C	Large open fronds with broad pinnae form a handsome clump. Tolerates part sun (when consistently watered).	Moist	Clumps 3–5 ft tall
Broad Beech Fern	<i>Phegopteris hexagonoptera</i>		M/P	Striking triangular frond, the upper two-thirds held almost horizontally. Spreads vigorously.	Average	Spreads 6–18" tall
Southern Shieldfern	<i>Pelazoneuron kunthii</i> [= <i>Thelypteris kunthii</i>]		M/P/C	Creates dense, vigorously growing colonies in wet areas, tolerating sun. Less aggressively spreading in average soils. Great for massing, but not for interspersing with other plants. Zones 7-10	Average to wet	Spreads 1–3 ft tall
Christmas Fern	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>		M/P/C	Best all-around! Evergreen, and drought tolerant once established. A familiar sight in woodlands statewide and great in the garden.	Average	Clumps 1–2 ft tall

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