



# 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. They are available commercially but if your local nursery does not sell these native plants—encourage them to do so!

**North Carolina  
Native Plant Society**

**For information about the North Carolina Native Plant Society and to find a local chapter, visit: [www.NCNPS.org](http://www.NCNPS.org) or email: [secretary@ncwildflower.org](mailto:secretary@ncwildflower.org)**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Region	Comment	Soil	Features
<b>Southern Maidenhair</b>	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	P/C	Delicate, fills in well with wildflowers	Average	Spreads slowly
<b>Northern Maidenhair</b>	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	M/P	Delicate, with distinctive horse-shoe shaped frond	Average	Spreads slowly
<b>Southern Lady Fern</b>	<i>Athyrium asplenoides</i>	M/P/C	Easy to grow, some have red stipes	Average	Clumps
<b>Hairy Lip Fern</b>	<i>Myriopteris lanosa</i> [= <i>Cheilanthes lanosa</i> ]	M/P/C	Some sun and dryish soil	Dryish	Spreads slowly
<b>Silvery Spleenwort</b>	<i>Deparia acrostichoides</i>	M/P	Drought and sun tolerant	Average	Clumps
<b>Southern Shieldfern</b>	<i>Dryopteris australis</i>	M/P/C	Semi-evergreen, large to 4 ft. tall, vigorous growth	Average-moist	Clumps
<b>Log Fern</b>	<i>Dryopteris celsa</i>	M/P/C	Semi-evergreen, large best in moist soil	Average-moist	Clumps
<b>Fancy Fern</b>	<i>Dryopteris intermedia</i>	M/P	Evergreen, formal growth with most delicate frond	Average	Clumps
<b>Southern Woodfern</b>	<i>Dryopteris ludoviciana</i>	P/C	Shiny evergreen frond, likes moist soil	Moist	Clumps
<b>Marginal Woodfern</b>	<i>Dryopteris marginalis</i>	M/P	Evergreen, formal growth form	Average-dryish	Clumps
<b>Sensitive Fern</b>	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	M/P/C	Distinctive fronds, sterile and fertile; spreads vigorously	Average-moist-wet	Spreads
<b>Cinnamon Fern</b>	<i>Osmundastrum cinnamomeum</i>	M/P/C	Robust, large to 4 ft.	Moist	Clumps
<b>Royal Fern</b>	<i>Osmunda spectabilis</i>	M/P/C	Large to 4 ft., handsome	Moist	Clumps
<b>Broad Beech Fern</b>	<i>Phegopteris hexagonoptera</i>	M/P	Triangular frond, handsome, spreads vigorously	Average	Spreads
<b>Christmas Fern</b>	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	M/P/C	Best all-around, evergreen, drought tolerant	Average	Clumps
<b>New York Fern</b>	<i>Amauropelta noveboracensis</i>	M/P/C	Delicate, brittle fronds, spreads rapidly	Average	Spreads
<b>Netted Chain Fern</b>	<i>Lorinseria areolata</i> [= <i>Woodwardia areolata</i> ]	M/P/C	Colorful new fronds, interesting fertile fronds	Moist-wet	Spreads

All ferns require part sun to shade

M = Mountains

P = Piedmont

C = Coast