

FERN GENUS CHARACTERISTICS

A QUICK REFERENCE

Noting the name, meaning, number and distribution of species and a brief description.

ADIANTUM - maidenhair - Greek - to shed water - 200 species, mostly tropical - worldwide - stipe brittle frequently black or red-black; fronds lacking a distinct midrib; foliage delicate, lacy, often drooping; thin textured; pinna fan or wedge shaped; sori around the outer edges covered with a false indusium of curled segments; evergreen and deciduous.

↑ *Adiantum aleuticum*

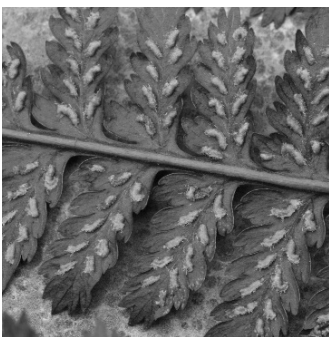


↓ *Asplenium trichomanes*

ASPENIUM - without spleen referring to a reputation for curing disorders of the spleen - 700 species - many hybrids - worldwide - usually evergreen; small with dark stipes; foliage varied - bird's nest fern to *A. trichomanes*; stipes short; sori in herringbone pattern; indusium attached to a vein opening on one side (clamshell fashion).

ATHYRIUM - to sport - 180 species - temperate and tropical; deciduous; stipes usually stout and succulent; green or straw colored and long; fronds long thin textured; sori central with half moon shaped indusium opening along one side.

↑ *Athyrium filix-femina*



↓ *Blechnum wattsii*

BLECHNUM - Greek name for a type of fern - 220 species - temperate and tropical; evergreen and sub-evergreen leathery and dimorphic (fertile and sterile fronds different); fertile fronds erect; sori linear occupying entire space from midrib to out edge of fertile frond segment; indusium linear with central lengthwise opening (slit down the middle)!

CYRTOMIUM - arching - 15 species - temperate & sub tropical; stipe stiff; evergreen pinnate leathery foliage; bold; low light; smoke and drought tolerant; sori central with peltate (umbrella like) indusium.

↑ *Cyrtomium macrophyllum*



↓ *Cystopteris bulbifera*

CYSTOPTERIS - bladder fern - 18 species - temperate; small delicate, common; deciduous; light green; spore black when ripe; sori on veins with hood-like covering.

DIPLAZIUM - very close to *Athyrium*, but the sori never hook over the veins, and are sometimes paired back-to-back. Additionally, the grooves in the rachis are U-shaped vs. V-shaped in *Athyrium*.

DRYOPTERIS - wood fern – 250 + species - worldwide; evergreen and deciduous, small to very large; sturdy; usually divided - often finely so; hybridizes frequently; sori central with kidney shaped indusium.

↑ *Dryopteris × complexa*



GYMNOCARPIUM - naked fruit - no indusium - few species - temperate; stiff brittle stipe; horizontal triangular fronds; deciduous; thin texture; spreading via underground rhizomes; sori round.

MATTEUCCIA - named for an Italian physicist; 3 species - temperate; very large deciduous plummy fronds; dimorphic with sterile fronds to 5'; fertile fronds to 2' with sori in hard brown pods.



Matteuccia orientale



OSMUNDA - Osmund - Thor - Scandinavian god of war - 10 species - mostly temperate; large deciduous primitive ferns; moisture loving; spore not on underside of leaf but on separate stalks from rachis (flowering fern).



Osmunda regalis



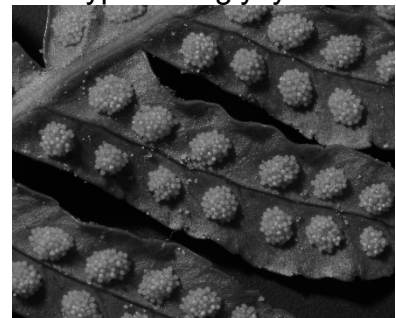
Phyllitis (Asplenium) scolopendrium

PHYLLITIS - leaf - often listed as Asplenium - 8 species - many varieties - temperate; stipes very short; simple undivided foliage; evergreen long fronds; sori linear; prominent like rows of buttonholes opening through central split.

POLYPODIUM - many footed - 100 species (formerly 1127 species - see Dryopteris) - widely distributed; prominent creeping rhizome; often epiphytic; evergreen leathery leaves; usually pinnate; large round sori; no indusium, often yellow to orange in color



Polypodium glycyrrhiza



POLYSTICHUM - many stitches - in reference to the spore pattern on the under leaf; 180 species - worldwide; mostly temperate; sturdy evergreen growth in a single crown or cluster; pinnate to finely divided foliage; short stipes; frequently with shiny foliage with bristly toothed edges; sori covered with peltate indusium., sori typically in rows

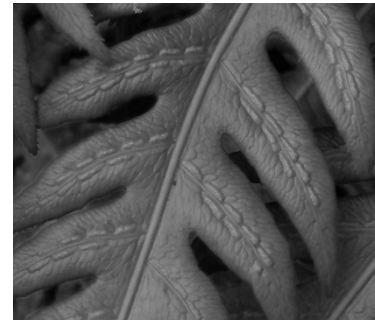


Polystichum munitum

WOODSIA - named for botanist Joseph Woods - 37 species - temperate to arctic; small deciduous ferns in woods and on rocks; spores brown on the outer edges of pinna; indusium fist like opening star like from under the sporangia.



Woodsia polystichoides



Woodwardia unigemmata

WOODWARDIA - named for botanist Thomas Woodward - 14 species - mostly temperate - acid soil; extremely large coarse evergreen & deciduous ferns; sori in long lines like strings of sausage (hence chain fern); sori linear opening in a central split.