The ferns listed in this brochure are both easy-to-grow and generally considered deer *resistant*. No plant is *deer-proof*.

Scientific names follow Arthur Haines, Flora Novae Angliae, 2011

NATIVE PLANTS

- Native plants give a sense of place in harmony with the natural character of the countryside.
- In addition to beauty and harmony, native plants can offer conservation benefits, even in a small backyard.

FERNS

- *Ferns provide cover to protect wildlife such as small mammals, small birds and frogs from predatory birds*
- *On hot days, ferns offer small wildlife a cool resting spot*
- *Some birds line their nests with material from Cinnamon Ferns*
- *Ferns spread readily via rhizomes (underground stems)*
- *Fern rhizomes hold soil strongly in place, retarding erosion*
- *Ferns provide texture and color interest in both formal and natural gardens*
- *Many ferns can be propagated by division*

All the species listed in this brochure are available in the nursery trade. However, some are more readily available than others.

Please resist the temptation to dig up ferns from natural areas.

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Easy-to-Grow, Deer-Resistant Connecticut Native Ferns for Habitat Restoration and Garden Beauty

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September 2015

EASY-TO-GROW, DEER-RESISTANT, CONNECTICUT NATIVE FERNS for Habitat Restoration and Garden Beauty

		LIGHT			MOISTURE				SOIL CHARACTERISTICS										SIZE		FORM				NATIVE HABITATS
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	Sun	Part Sun/ Light Shade	Shade	Dry	Somewhat dry	Moist	Wet	Tolerates Summer Dryness	Prefers/Needs Constant Moisture	Prefers/Needs Well-drained Soil	Typical of Rich sites	High Calcium Substrates	Somewhat Alkaline Soil	Neutral pH	Slightly Acid Soil	Acidic Soil	Strongly Acid Soil	Height (inches)	Width (inches)	Symmetric or Asymmetric Clumping	Wandering	Aggressive	Evergreen	
Adiantum pedatum	Northern Maidenhair Fern		x	sh			M			P		R		X	X	X			12-24	24		W			Rich, moist woodlands in circumneutral soils
Athyrium angustum	Northern Lady Fern		x	sh			M												20-30	24	A				Moist woods, swamp *margins*; meadows, stream banks, open areas
Athyrium asplenioides	Southern Lady Fern		x	sh			M												20-30	24	A				Moist to wet woods, swamp margins; also thickets
Cystopteris bulbifera	Bulbil Fragile Fern		x	sh			M				x		X	X					12-24	12-24	A				Calcareous areas W. of the CT River; on thin soil, wet ledges, slopes
Cystopteris fragilis	Fragile Fern		x	sh			M				x	R			R				3-8	6-12	A				Rich open woods, rocky slopes
Dennstaedtia punctilobula	Eastern Hay-scented Fern		x	sh	X		M		Y								X	X	16-24	36-48		W	xx		Forest, field, rocky slops, damp shore; often sterile soil; WEEDY
Deparia acrostichoides	Silvery False Spleenwort			sh			M		N			R			X	X			18-30	24-36	A				Rich woods, moist shady banks
Dryopteris marginalis	Marginal Wood Fern		x	sh		X	M												16-24	18-24	S			+	Rocky hillsides in rich woods; shady, rocky Oak forest slopes
Matteuccia struthiopteris ssp. *pensylvanica*	Ostrich Fern, Fiddlehead Fern	su	x	sh			M	W	Y	N		±		X	X	X			24-48	36-72	S	W			Rich, moist habitats
Onoclea sensibilis	Sensitive Fern	su	x	sh			M	W											10-24	24-36		W			Wet places in woods, meadows, openings, swamp margins
Osmunda claytoniana	Interrupted Fern	su	x	sh			M	W	Y						X	X			24-48	36-48	S	w			Open moist/wet woods, thickets, swamp margins, damp rocky woods
Osmunda regalis var. *spectabilis*	Royal Fern	su	x				M	W									X		24-48	24-36	S				Swamps, wet woods, shores, shallow water
Osmundastrum cinnamomeum	Cinnamon Fern	su	x	sh			M	W								X			24-60	24-48	S				Moist to wet forests, swamps, shorelines, and other moist places
Parathelypteris novaboracensis	New York Fern		x	sh		X	M	W											16-30	24-36		W			Dry to damp woods/thickets; moist Oak or Sugar Maple-Ash forests
Phegopteris connectilis	Long Beech Fern			sh			M												8-22	24-36		W			Shaded forest, streambanks, ravines, cliff bases, cool rocky banks
Phegopteris hexagonoptera	Broad Beech Fern			sh			M												12-26	36		W			Mesic forests, swamp borders, thickets
Polypodium virginianum	Rock Polypody			sh					Y								X		3-10	8-16		W		+	On thin soil of rocks, banks, tree bases, and rocky slopes
Polystichum acrostichoides	Christmas Fern			sh		X	M												8-16	14-24	A			+	Rocky hillsides in moist woods, open thickets
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken Fern	su	x	sh	X	X	M		Y										12-60	36-120		W	xx		Fields, roadsides, thickets, open woods, woodlands, dry sterile woods
Thelypteris palustris var. *pubescens*	Marsh Fern	su	x	sh			M	W											12-36	24-36		W			Marsh, swamp, peatland, shorelines, bog margins, sterile meadows
Woodwardia areolata	Netted Chain Fern		x	sh		X	M	W	Y								X		12-28	24-36		W	±		Acid bogs, swampy woods, low fields
Woodwardia virginica	Virginia Chain Fern		x	sh			M	W	Y								X		24-36	36-48		W			Acid soils of swamps, marshes, bogs, ditches, moist/wet woods

NOTES:

Tolerances for soil moisture refer to adult individuals. Attention to maining good soil moisture in the first year often is required to get plants established.

Generally, where ferns have a wide range of suitable light conditions, ferns growing in full sun will require the wettest soils within their moisture range.

In garden conditions, ferns do better when the soil is well drained (though not so well drained that it is droughty).