Ostrich Fern

Matteuccia strutheriopteris

Matteuccia strutheriopteris
Photo courtesy of Northscaping.com

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 1b

Description:

The most common and recognizable of the ferns, this is a very tough and hardy plant, featuring tall lacy fronds all season long; spreads aggressively and may require some control; grows best in shade with rich, moist soil; great for textural effect

Ornamental Features:

Ostrich Fern's large fragrant ferny compound leaves remain light green in color throughout the season. Neither the flowers nor the fruit are ornamentally significant.

Landscape Attributes:

Ostrich Fern is an herbaceous deciduous fern with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a high maintenance fern that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Invasive

Ostrich Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Groundcover
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Mass Planting

Plant Characteristics:

Ostrich Fern will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 feet from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This fern performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This plant can be propagated by division.

This species is native to parts of North America.