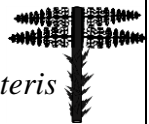


Common Ferns of the Great Plains



*Caution-This is a limited species key
NWPL

1. Ferns with dimorphic fronds, distinct sterile and fertile leaflets on the same frond or on two separate and distinct fronds*.
 2. Ferns with two separate types of fronds (dimorphic), sterile and fertile.
 3. Fronds once cut.*
 4. Leaflets opposite*Onoclea*
 4. Leaflets alternate.....*Woodwardia* (in part)
 3. Fronds twice cut.*
 5. Fronds grow from a blackish knobbed base, stems and leaflets mostly lacking hairs.....*Matteuccia*
 5. Fronds lacking blackish knobbed base, stems and underside of leaflets very hairy.....*Osmundastrum*
 2. Ferns with fronds that have separate sterile and fertile leaflets on the same frond.
 6. Fronds once cut*Asplenium*
 6. Fronds twice cut*Osmunda*
1. Ferns with only one type of frond, fertile and sterile fronds, and leaflets similar, sometimes the fronds of an individual fern may lack any fertile sori.
 7. Fronds twice cut.
 8. Stalked, fan-shaped pinnules..... *Adiantum* (in part)
 8. Pinnules not on stalks, various shapes.
 9. Sori elongated in chain like structures**
.....*Woodwardia* (in part)
 9. Sori circular or crescent shaped but not in long chain-like arrangements.....*Thelypteris*
 7. Fronds thrice cut.
 9. Fronds with numerous scales at base.....*Dryopteris*
 9. Fronds with very few scales or scales lacking.



11. Fronds divided from base to form a cluster of fronds.

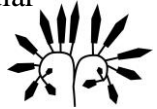


10. Fronds wider than 6 inches and taller than one foot.....*Athyrium*

10. Smaller fronds, less than 6 inches wide and one foot tall..... *Cystopteris*

11. Fronds divided from a central erect stalk and/or from near the base but not forming clusters of fronds.

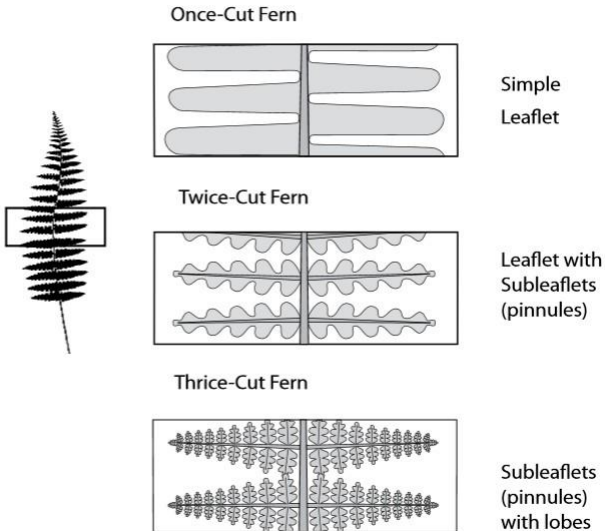
12. Fronds divided into a circular or semi-circular shape with black forked stalks, 1 – 1.5 feet tall*Adiantum* (in part)



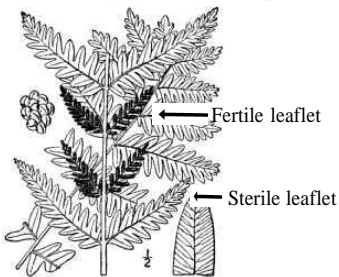
12. Fronds divided into a three parted triangle; stalks green to pale brown; 1 – 5 feet tall*Pteridium*

- * Frond(s) is equal to saying leaf or leaves. The smaller leaf units on a frond are referred to as pinnae or leaflets. See below for types of dimorphic fronds.

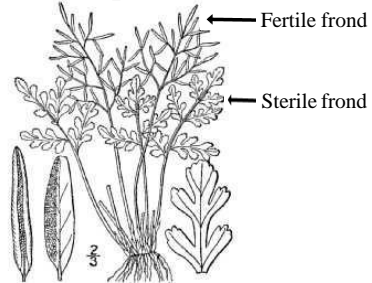
Leaflet Shapes



Dimorphic leaflets/pinnae

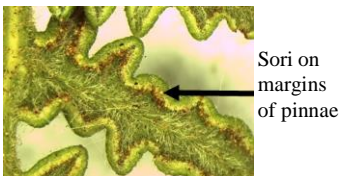


Dimorphic fronds



USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions. 3 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Vol. 1: 32.

- ** Sori are clusters of sac like structures known as sporangia that contain spores, a reproductive unit of ferns.



Adiantum capillus-veneris
Southern Maidenhair (FACW)



Asplenium platyneuron
Ebony Spleenwort (FACU)



Athyrium angustum
Northern Lady Fern (FAC)



Athyrium cyclosorum
Western Lady Fern (FAC)



Cystopteris fragilis
Brittle Bladder Fern (FACU)



Dryopteris carthusiana
Spinulose Wood Fern (FACW)



Matteuccia struthiopteris
Ostrich Fern (FACW)



Onoclea sensibilis
Sensitive Fern (FACW)



Osmunda spectabilis
Royal Fern (OBL)



Osmundastrum cinnamomeum
Cinnamon Fern (FACW)



Pteridium aquilinum
Northern Bracken Fern (FACU)



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Thelypteris palustris
Eastern Marsh Fern (OBL)



4. © 2016 Glen Miffelhauser

Woodwardia areolata
Netted Chain Fern (OBL)



Photo Credit:

1. Lovit, Marilee. 2016. *Athyrium angustum*. Copyright © Marilee Lovit 2016. New England Wild Flower Society. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
2. Bramely, Frank. 2016. *Dryopteris carthusiana*. Copyright © 2016 New England Wild Flower Society 2016. Go Botany. New England Wild Flower Society. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
3. Patterson, Bruce. 2016. *Matteuccia struthiopteris*. Copyright © Bruce Patterson. 2016 New England Wild Flower Society. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
4. Mittlehauser, Glen. 2016. *Osmundastrum cinnamomeum* & *Thelypteris palustris*. Copyright © Glen Mittlehauser. 2016 New England Wild Flower Society. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
5. Carr, Gerald. 2013. *Woodwardia fimbriata*. Digital image. Oregon Flora Image Project. University of Hawaii: Botany Department. Web. 2 Feb. 2016. <http://www.botany.hawaii.edu/faculty/carr/ofp/woo_fim.htm>.