

Common Ferns of Alaska



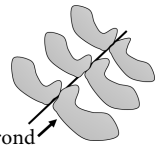
*Caution-This is a limited species key
NWPL

1. Ferns with 2 types of fronds* (sterile and fertile) as separate leaf structures.
 2. Fronds once cut, ferns of mesic forest habitats.....*Blechnum*
 2. Fronds twice or three time cut, ferns of moist to rocky habitats.
 3. Fronds twice cut, ferns of wet areas.*Matteuccia*
 3. Fronds three times cut, ferns many time in rocky habitats *Cryptogramma*

1. Ferns with only one type of frond, with or without fertile sori on the single frond type.
 4. Fronds divided into circular or semi-circular shape with black, forked stalks *Adiantum*

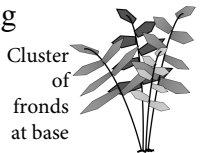


4. Fronds not divided into circular shape with a black stalk.
 5. Ferns with once cut fronds with “thumb” shape at the base of pinnae, typically found in understory of conifer forests. *Polystichum*

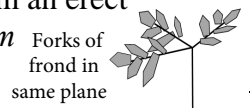


5. Ferns with twice or three times (thrice) cut fronds*, lacking thumb shape at base of pinnae.
6. Ferns that have twice cut fronds.
 7. Indusium** lacking, final leaflet tips not toothed or tooth-like *Phegopteris*
 7. Indusium** round to kidney shaped, final leaflets toothed *Dryopteris*
6. Ferns with three cut (thrice) fronds.*

8. Fronds divided from the base forming a cluster of fronds. *Athyrium*

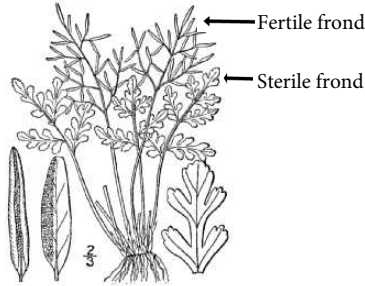
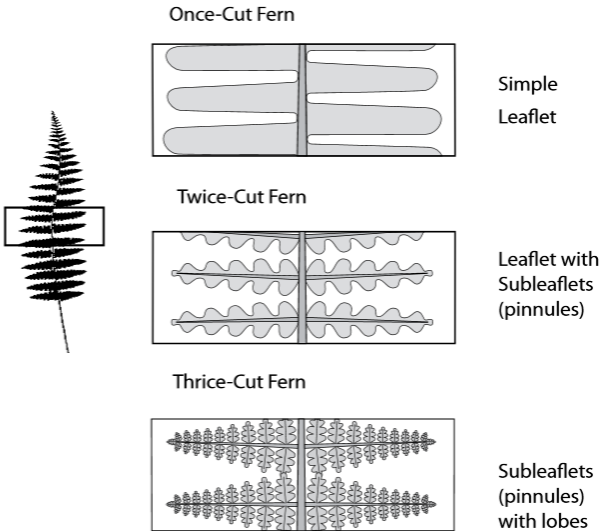


8. Fronds split into a distinct 3 way split; set of fronds from a central point from an erect central stalk. *Gymnocarpium*



* Frond(s) is equal to saying leaf or leaves. The smaller leaf units on a frond are referred to as pinnae.

Leaflet Shapes



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.

** **Indusium** is the flap or shield covering the sori (clusters of sac-like structures (sporangia) housing the spores), the reproductive structure.



Sporangia lacking an indusium



Sporangia with round indusium

Blechnum spicant
Deer Fern (FAC)



Matteuccia struthiopteris
Ostrich Fern (FACW)



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Cryptogramma stelleri
Fragile Rockbrake (UPL)



Adiantum aleuticum
Aleutian Maidenhair (FAC)



Polystichum lonchitis
Northern Holly Fern (UPL)



Phegopteris connectilis
Narrow Beech Fern (FACU)



Dryopteris expansa
Spreading Wood Fern (FACU)



Athyrium cyclosorum
Western Lady Fern (FAC)



Gymnocarpium dryopteris
Northern Oak Fern (FACU)



Photo Credit:

¹Robert H. Mohlenbrock, hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / USDA NRCS. 1992. Western wetland flora: Field office guide to plant species. West Region, Sacramento.

²Rehm, Jennifer. Blechnum Spicant. Digital image. Hansen's The Wild Garden: Northwest Native Plant Database. Jennifer Rehm, 2012. Web. <http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/ble_spi.html>.

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⁴CYSIP. Cryptogramma Stelleri. Digital image. CYSIP: Botany. Central Yukon Species Inventory Project, 2011. Web. 2 Feb. 2016. <<http://www.flora.dempstercountry.org/>>.

⁵Legler, Ben. Used with permission. Further use requires written permission from photographer.

⁶Slichter, Paul. 2008. Oak Ferns of Mt. Adams: The Genus Gymnocarpium. Digital image. Flora & Fauna Northwest. Gresham High School. Web. <<http://science.halleyhosting.com/nature/>>.