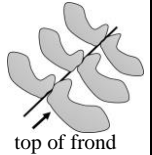


Common Ferns of the Midwest



*Caution-This is a limited species key
NWPL

1. Ferns with dimorphic fronds with distinct sterile and fertile leaflets separate on one frond or as two separate and distinct fronds*.
 2. Ferns with two separate types of fronds (dimorphic), sterile and fertile.
 3. Ferns with leaflets once cut*.....*Onoclea*
 3. Ferns with leaflets twice cut*.
 4. Fronds grow from a blackish knobbed base, stems and leaflets mostly lacking hairs.....*Matteuccia*
 4. Fronds lacking blackish knobbed base, stems and underside of leaflets very hairy.....*Osmundastrum*
 2. Ferns with fronds that have sterile and fertile leaflets on the same frond.
 5. Fern leaflets cut twice.....*Osmunda*
 5. Fronds cut once.
 6. Stalk green; all pinnae with a thumb-shaped base*Polystichum*
 6. Stalk dark brown; basal pinnae with a thumb-shaped base.....*Asplenium*



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. Lower two pinnae (leaflets) pointing downward*Phegopteris*



8. Lower two pinnae more or less at right angle to stem.

9. Fronds mostly broadest at base, stem wire-like and black, leaf edges rolled*Thelypteris*



9. Fronds tapered at both ends, stems thin, brown to green.....*Parathelypteris*



7. Fronds thrice cut.

10. Fronds with very scaly bases.....*Dryopteris*



10. Fronds with very few scales or scales lacking.

11. Fronds divided from the base, forming a cluster of fronds.



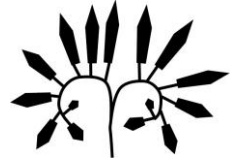
12. Fronds wider than 6 inches and taller than 1 foot
.....*Athyrium*

12. Fronds smaller than 6 inches wide and 1 foot tall
.....*Cystopteris*

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

13. Fronds divided into a circular or semi-circular shape with black forked stalks, 1 - 1.5 feet tall

.....*Adiantum*

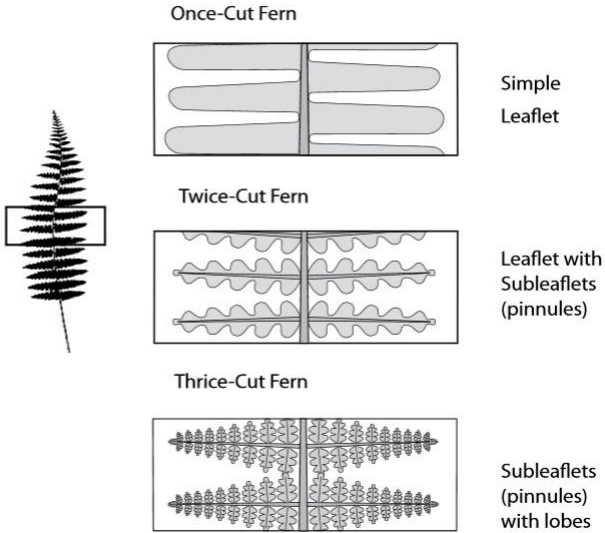


13. Fronds divided into a three parted triangle stalks green to pale brown; 1.5 – 5 feet tall

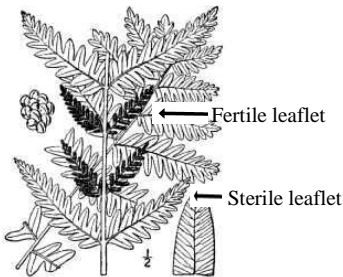
.....*Pteridium*

- * 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.

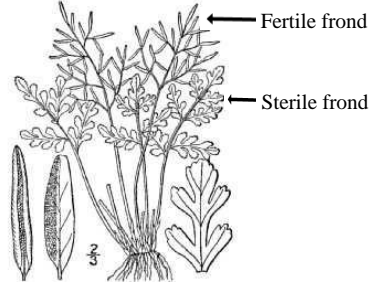
Leaflet Shapes



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.

Adiantum pedatum
Northern Maidenhair (FACU)



Asplenium platyneuron
Ebony Spleenwort (FACU)



Athyrium angustum
Northern Lady Fern (FAC)



Cystopteris bulbifera
Bulblet Bladder Fern (FACW)



Species Key:

- 1. Sori near leaflet margin (Fig. A).....*Dryopteris marginalis*
- 1. Sori in between leaflet margin and midvein (Fig. B).
 - 2. Fronds green through winter.....*Dryopteris intermedia*
 - 2. Fronds dying in winter
 - 3. Fronds twice to thrice cut at base.....*Dryopteris carthusiana*
 - 3. Fronds once to twice cut at base.....*Dryopteris cristata*

Fig. A

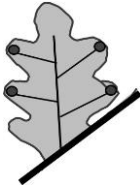
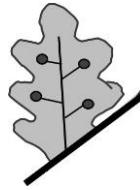


Fig. B



Dryopteris carthusiana
Spinulose Wood Fern (FACW)



3. © 2016 New
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Dryopteris cristata
Crested Wood Fern (OBL)



Dryopteris intermedia
Evergreen Wood Fern (FACU)



Dryopteris marginalis
Marginal Wood Fern (FACU)



2. © 2016 Arthur Haines

Matteuccia struthiopteris
Ostrich Fern (FACW)



Onoclea sensibilis
Sensitive Fern (FACW)



Osmunda spectabilis
Royal Fern (OBL)



Species Key:

Fertile (spore bearing) leaflets at the top of frond; infertile leaflets below fertile leaflets*O. spectabilis*

-OR-

Infertile leaflets above and below fertile leaflets.....*O. claytoniana*

Osmunda claytoniana
Interrupted Fern (FAC)



Osmundastrum cinnamomeum
Cinnamon Fern (FACW)



Parathelypteris noveboracensis
New York Fern (FAC)



Phegopteris hexagonoptera
Broad Beech Fern (FACU)



Polytrichum acrostichoides
Christmas Fern (UPL)



Pteridium aquilinum
Northern Bracken Fern (FACU)



NWPL



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Thelypteris palustris
Eastern Marsh Fern (OBL)



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2. Haines, Arthur. 2016. *Cysopteris bulbifera*, *Dryopteris intermedia* & *Dryopteris marginalis*. Copyright © Arthur Haines 2016. Go Botany. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
3. *Dryopteris carthusiana*. Copyright © New England Wildflower Society 2016. Go Botany. New England Wild Flower Society. Web. <<https://gobotany.newenglandwild.org>>.
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6. Chakya, K. 2012. *Dryopteris cristata*. Copyright © 2012 K. Chakya. Web. <<https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/fern/crested-fern>>.