Plant Finder

Ghost Fern

Athyrium 'Ghost'

Height: 30 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4a

Description:

A tall, upright selection, great for adding texture to shaded gardens and borders; presenting arching light green fronds with silver overtones, contrasting against its dark purple stems; an easy to grow variety requiring little to no maintenance

Ornamental Features

Ghost Fern is primarily valued in the garden for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. Its attractive ferny bipinnately compound leaves emerge silver in spring, turning light green in color with hints of silver throughout the season. The deep purple stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Ghost Fern is a dense herbaceous 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 relatively low maintenance plant, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Ghost Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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



Ghost Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Ghost Fern
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Ghost Fern will grow to be about 30 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in full shade. Keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in moist to wet soil, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.