



***Athyrium filix-femina* – Lady Fern**

COMMON NAME: Lady Fern, Female Fern

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Athyrium filix-femina* The name *Athyrium* comes from Greek where “a” means without and “thureos” means shield.

REPRODUCTION: The spores are borne inconspicuously along the leaf margin and are concealed in a manner deemed “female”. The spores form between June and September. Propagate by division in the early spring.

SIZE: Medium-sized, delicate, graceful fern with feathery fronds 2-3 feet long and about 8 inches wide.

BEHAVIOR: Forms dense patches of beautiful, lacy leaves. Although deciduous, it will continue to send up crosiers (fiddleheads) until frost. Colonizes easily. The heavy, often half-buried, horizontal rootstock creeps, but does not take over.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Quite adaptable. Best grown in humus-rich soil. It tolerates drier soil better than most ferns and will grow under the eaves of a house where the soil can be dry and shaded.

SPECIAL FEATURES: In shade the stalks are pinkish, making a lovely contrast to delicate green foliage. In late summer it loses much of its delicacy. It is excellent for covering the fading foliage of spring bulbs.

NATURAL RANGE: Found over most of the continental United States and Canada.

SUGGESTED CARE: Easy to grow in wooded soil and shade. Give it plenty of water and protection from wind for longer lasting greenery.

COMPANION PLANTS: Silvery spleenwort, evergreen wood fern, spinulose wood fern, sedge, maidenhair fern, wild geranium, bloodroot, trillium, bellwort.