

Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale



## ***Matteuccia struthiopteris* – Ostrich Fern**

COMMON NAME: Ostrich Fern

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Matteuccia struthiopteris* - This name comes from the Greek word *struthio* meaning “ostrich” and *pteris* meaning “fern.” Carlo Matteucci (1811-1868) was an Italian physicist. This fern was formerly called *Pteris pensylvanica*.

REPRODUCTION: Spore-bearing fronds are dark brown and are borne mid-summer. They remain visible through the winter.

SIZE: Medium to large fern, 2-5 feet tall.

BEHAVIOR: Spreads underground forming sizeable colonies. May become aggressive. The fronds are in clumps.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Native on moist, shaded floodplain, but can be grown almost anywhere. Tends to burn in full sun and wind, and on very dry soils.

SPECIAL FEATURES: A tall, graceful fern. The long sterile fronds resemble ostrich feathers. The spore-bearing fronds can be useful in dried arrangements. A very tough plant!

SUGGESTED CARE: Water well during the first season. Then focus on keeping it under control.

NATURAL RANGE: Eastern Canada to southern Alaska, south to Virginia, Ohio, Missouri, South Dakota and British Columbia. Found throughout Wisconsin, especially northward.

COMPANION PLANTS: Wild Ginger, green ash, swamp buttercup, Virginia bluebells, silver maple, hackberry, wild blue phlox, common elderberry, American elm, hairy wood violet and golden Alexander.