Leatherleaf Fern

Rumohra adiantiformis



Leatherleaf Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Leathery Shieldfern, Iron Fern, Seven Weeks Fern

Description:

Most recognized as standard greenery in floral arrangements, this fern produces deep green leathery foliage that is textural with a nice sheen; prefers bright shade with no direct sun; great for containers and baskets

Ornamental Features

Leatherleaf Fern's attractive glossy ferny leaves emerge light green in spring, turning dark green in color the rest of the year on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Leatherleaf Fern is an herbaceous annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Leatherleaf Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

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Planting & Growing

Leatherleaf Fern will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Leatherleaf Fern is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.

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