



Robust Male Fern

Dryopteris filix-mas 'Undulata Robusta'

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ● ●

Hardiness Zone: 4a

Other Names: Common Male Fern, *D. complexa*

Description:

Graceful, arching fronds with wavy margins, a vigorous grower; attractive shaggy fiddleheads unfurl in spring; keep evenly moist, provides habitat and shelter for birds and bees

Ornamental Features

Robust Male Fern's tiny ferny compound leaves remain green in color throughout the year. Neither the flowers nor the fruit are ornamentally significant.

Landscape Attributes

Robust Male Fern is an herbaceous evergreen fern with a shapely form and gracefully arching fronds. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. 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.

Robust Male Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Robust Male 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. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. As this plant tends to go dormant in summer, it is best interplanted with late-season bloomers to hide the dying foliage.



Robust Male Fern in spring
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This is a selection of a native North American species, 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.

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