# Desert Fern

***Lysiloma microphylla var. thornberi***

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Feather Bush syn. Lysiloma watsonii



*Desert Fern*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*

**Description:**

This large shrub is perfect for planting on steep slopes or areas where erosion is a problem; creates light, dappled shade in garden settings; an attractive and durable plant

**Ornamental Features**

Desert Fern features dainty panicles of white pincushion flowers at the ends of the branches in mid spring, which emerge from distinctive chartreuse flower buds. It has attractive green deciduous foliage. The tiny ferny bipinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. The fruits are showy brown pods displayed in mid summer. The mottled gray bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



*Desert Fern foliage*
*Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder*

**Landscape Attributes**

Desert Fern is an open multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Desert Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening

**Planting & Growing**

Desert Fern will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America.