Blue Star Fern

Phlebodium aureum

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Rabbit's Foot Fern, Gold Foot Fern, Polypodium

Description:

A clumping fern variety producing irregular, arching fronds of blue-green foliage; a nice groundcover for a woodland area; great in hanging baskets or containers, for indoors or out

Ornamental Features

Blue Star Fern's attractive ferny pinnately compound leaves emerge chartreuse in spring, turning bluish-green in color the rest of the year on a plant with an arching habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Blue Star Fern is a dense herbaceous evergreen fern with a shapely form and gracefully arching fronds. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Blue Star Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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



Blue Star Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Blue Star Fern
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Blue Star Fern will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Blue Star Fern is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its height, it is often used 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.