Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern

Microsorum punctatum 'Grandiceps'



Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 10

Other Names: Crested Fern, Fish-tail Fern, Strap Fern

Description:

This attractive, easy to grow fern presents bright green, glossy fronds that consist of single blades that fork and twist at the end, with wavy margins; fronds rise in a dense clump from a rhizome just under the soil; a great garden accent plant

Ornamental Features

Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern's attractive glossy lobed leaves remain light green in color with curious coppery-bronze undersides and tinges of forest green throughout the year on a plant with an arching habit of growth.



Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern in full
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern is a dense herbaceous evergreen fern with a shapely form and gracefully arching fronds. 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 usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Groundcover
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 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 type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Terrestrial Elkhorn Fern is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. 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.