



Zamia Fern
Bowenia spectabilis

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ● ●

Hardiness Zone: 9b

Description:

Grown primarily for foliage, the leaves emerge from underground tubers and arch outward from a loose rosette; beautiful, ferny, deep green glossy foliage that adds great texture to a shaded area; prefers moist, organic soil;

Ornamental Features

Zamia Fern has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring on a plant with an arching habit of growth. The glossy pointy bipinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. It features subtle spikes of creamy white flowers with green overtones rising above the foliage in mid summer. The green fruits are held in cones in late summer.

Landscape Attributes

Zamia Fern is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a shapely form and gracefully arching branches. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. 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.

Zamia Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Zamia Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Zamia Fern will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot 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 approximately 20 years.

This shrub 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. This species is not originally from North America, 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.

Zamia Fern makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. 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 grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.