



Hardy Ribbon Fern

Pteris cretica var. nervosa

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ● ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Hardy Cretan Brake, Bird's Foot Fern

Description:

Interesting, arching mound of shiny, light green, lanceolate fronds that are lightly crinkled; hardier than other members of species; a great garden groundcover or container plant

Ornamental Features

Hardy Ribbon Fern is primarily valued in the garden for its cascading habit of growth. Its attractive crinkled narrow compound leaves emerge chartreuse in spring, turning light green in colour the rest of the year.

Landscape Attributes

Hardy Ribbon Fern is an herbaceous annual with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. 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 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.

Hardy Ribbon Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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



Hardy Ribbon Fern
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Hardy Ribbon Fern will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

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 not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Hardy Ribbon 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.