



photo: Dan Jaffe

OSTRICH FERN

Pteretis nodulosa, also *Matteuccia struthiopteris*

The large, lustrous, and graceful dark green fronds of this fern resemble ostrich plumes in summer, after emerging as edible fiddleheads in spring. Will form a quick cover with spreading, underground rhizomes.

Growing Information

Sunlight	Part to full shade
Soil Type	Prefers moist, rich, well-drained soil
Height	3–5'
Deer resistant	
Flowering calendar	Non-flowering

Benefits for Wildlife

Leaves	Host plant for 4 species of moths
Flowers	No
Fruit	No
Seeds	No

Host to 4 caterpillar species:
(common names) *Conservula anodonta*;
Olethreutes auricapitana; Gold-spotted Ghost Moth; Reticulated Fruitworm Moth

Benefits for People

- Fiddleheads are edible
- Great for cut-flower arrangements
- The genus name *Matteuccie* honors an Italian physicist

Natural Habitat

- Moist thickets, shady stream sides

