



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Acrostichum daneifolium*¹

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Introduction

This beautiful fern native to Florida grows larger than many other ferns, becoming 4 to 8 feet tall (Fig. 1). The 3 to 6 feet long, pinnately divided fronds emerge from the ground to form a beautifully textured, open form. The plant changes very little throughout the year, but instead provides a continual green mass of beautiful foliage.

General Information

Scientific name: *Acrostichum daneifolium*

Pronunciation: ack-ro-STISH-um dan-ee-if-FOLE-ee-um

Common name(s): Leather Fern

Family: *Adiantaceae*

Plant type: perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 9 through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: mass planting; accent; border

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

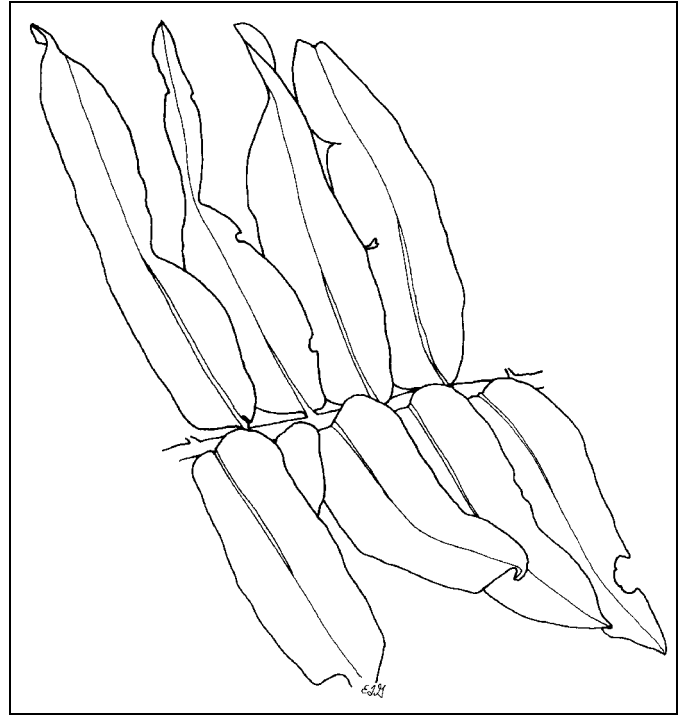


Figure 1. Leather Fern.

Description

Height: 4 to 8 feet

Spread: 3 to 5 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: open

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: odd-pinnately compound

Leaf margin: undulate

Leaf shape: linear; oblong

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-20, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1999. Please visit the EDIS web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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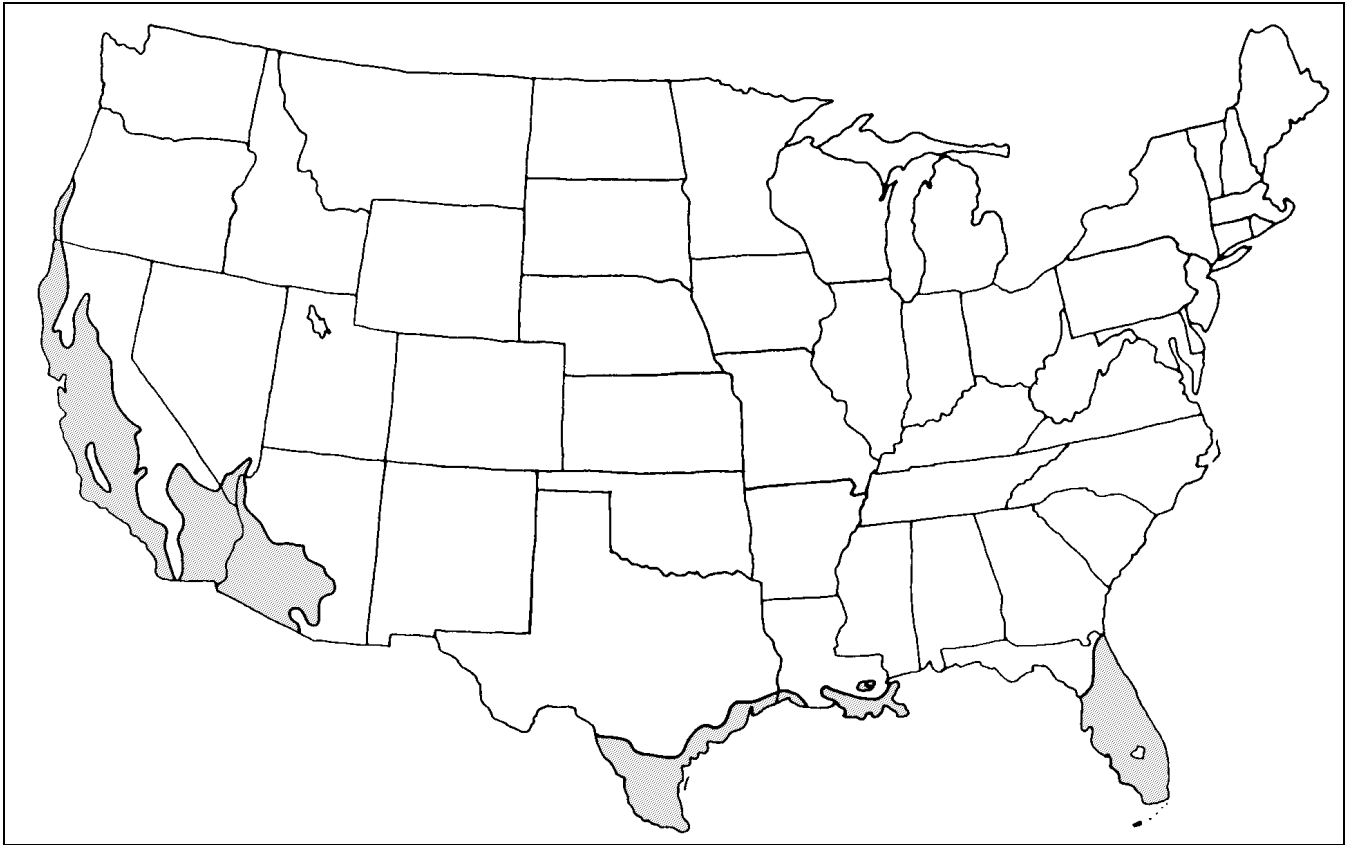


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: no flowers

Flower characteristic: no flowers

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit cover: unknown

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; usually with one stem/trunk

Current year stem/twig color: not applicable

Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in the shade

Soil tolerances: extended flooding; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

Drought tolerance:

Soil salt tolerances: good

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Leather Fern looks spectacular planted in mass in a large landscape. Its unusual texture and open habit combine to make this a great, eye-catching attraction. In a smaller residential landscape, Leather Fern can be used as a specimen planted alone to add texture to the garden. Many ferns grow poorly near the coast, however this one is tolerant of all but the most exposed ocean front lots.

Provide a shaded or partially shaded spot for Leather Fern for the best growth and to keep plants healthy. Prolonged direct sun, especially in the summer, can burn foliage. Many ferns grow best with regular applications of fertilizer to maintain growth and green foliage. Ferns transplant fine any time of year as long the soil ball is handled carefully.