

lady fern *Athyrium filix-femina*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Pteridophyta

Class: Filicopsida

Order: Polypodiales

Family: Dryopteridaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The lady fern is a large, lacy-cut fern. Each leaf may be about 30 inches tall and 10 inches wide. The leaf is lance-shaped with a drooping tip. The leaves grow in clusters and are not evergreen. Each leaf is divided into 25 or more pairs of leaflets. The leaflet is about eight inches long and one and one-half inches wide and is divided further into about 12 subleaflets. The rachis is smooth. The green or purple stipe is short.

BEHAVIORS

The lady fern may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in moist, open woodlands and along the edges of swamps. Spores are produced from June through September.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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