

Ferns for American Gardens

John T. Mickel

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John T. Mickel : Ferns for American Gardens before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ferns for American Gardens:

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Exhaustive but doesn't give every detail I wish for, and not enough photosBy Gen of North Coast GardeningI was disappointed in this book, because I LOVE ferns!! Love them. As a landscape designer, I thought it'd be really fun to have a reference for which new ferns I might seek out next.Unfortunately the text is more scientifically minded than gardening-minded. It's hard to tell from the text and info given whether a particular fern is this or that species, and the photos are inconsistent and leave a lot to be desired. Many photos are taken in poor light or from odd angles, and the way that sometimes they show a frond and sometimes a long view of six plants makes it very hard to compare species for ID purposes.Also, the photos were too small and not every variety listed had a picture. I'd prefer either a very scholarly reference detailing the differences in each fern so I could ID accurately, OR a "best-of" fern book including large, delicious photos of every fern listed, and only including those available in the trade.I feel like the book tried to do a little of both and so wasn't really the exhaustive reference fern geeks need, or the high-on-photos and inspiration reference that gardeners need. It just tried to do too much.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. "Fernishing" informationBy K. PatrickIn this excellent book Mickel furnishes an enormous amount of information about ferns without becoming pedantic or over-bearing. It is reflective of the author's life passion and years of hands-on gardening experience with these plants. The book is nicely organized so that a neophyte such as myself can reference it easily yet it provides enough in-depth information to satisfy the more advanced "fern-aholic". There are great sections on each species detailing origin, ease of cultivation

and habit. Although one can tell Mickel never met a fern he didn't like, he makes it engagingly obvious in some cases which are his favorites and why. There is a great section on *Matteuccia struthiopteris* (ostrich fern) which includes a recipe for preparing and cooking the fiddleheads. Differing from the cook's point of view, the gardener steps in to assure us that cutting the fiddleheads brings no lasting damage to the fern! In another section on the Himalayan maidenhair fern he shares his delight in the accidental discovery that this species is adaptable to indoor cultivation. The general information on fern structure and reproduction is concise and easily understood. There are a host of new terms in *Fern World* to be grasped, such as crosier, sori and rachis but Mickel makes them all comprehensible. Gardening with ferns, their preferred habitats, companion plants and even propagation are addressed as this is far more than a field identification book. There are an assortment of good line drawings and small color photographs of the individual fern species, but if this book has a weakness I would say that the photos are undersized and there are not enough of them. However, this is not an opulent coffee-table book but a good solid reference book which is easy to use and full of helpful, practical information for the fern-gardener at what ever level. I still rate it as a solid five star garden book. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. The best book on ferns for the gardener By E. Benjamin Dr. Mickel's *Ferns for American Gardens* is the most comprehensive and useful book on ferns for the professional and amateur gardener alike. For those of us who are plagued with deer in our gardens, ferns provide alternative deer-proof plantings. The variety and beauty of these plants have often been underrated, but they fill an important element in the shade garden as they provide texture not often found in other plants. What better way to get to know these plants than with this book. Chapters show the structure of the plant, how to use ferns in the landscape, and beautiful photographs of the many genera, species and cultivars, all listed in alphabetical order. Each plant shows practical attributes such as height, hardiness zones and difficulty of cultivation. A real plus. It also has a chapter on ferns for specific conditions such as sunny conditions, rock gardens etc. The Web now allows the interested gardener to acquire more unusual ferns, and this book will steer you to make the correct decisions on what would suit your garden best. I rate this book as a must-have on ferns.

Here's the definitive book on the cultivation and ornamental use of hardy ferns and their allies. Written by the Curator of Ferns at the New York Botanical Garden, it describes -- in an alphabetical by genus format -- more than 400 types of ferns and many more subspecies, varieties, and cultivars. Each entry explains the fern's habit, frond size, color, hardiness zones, and ease of cultivation, and more. There are also chapters on fern structure and propagation, lists of specific ferns suited to varying growing condition, and an extensive source list, bibliography, glossary, and index of common names. Filled with more than 360 full-color photographs, *Ferns for American Gardens* is the ideal reference for gardeners eager to acquaint themselves with this wide-ranging and adaptable group of plants.

From Booklist Mickel is the curator of ferns at the New York Botanical Garden, and he has included more than 400 types of ferns in this excellent reference source. Mickel begins with chapters on fern structure, fern growing and gardening with ferns, and fern propagation. Each entry in the list of ferns (arranged alphabetically by genus) covers foliage, habitat, method of culture and propagation, and suggestions on garden use and plant combinations. Appendixes include a list of ferns grown under various conditions, a list of fern societies, and a glossary. The finished book, a Garden Book Club selection, will have 360 color photographs. George Cohen A garden classic for ten years, selected by the American Horticultural Society as one of its 75 Great American Gardening Books. Westchester Journal News 20031211 If I want a lush, dark green fern, I look in *Ferns for American Gardens*, and perhaps I will chose the black lady fern, an easy grower. -- Donna Williamson HortResources Newsletter 20040121 *Ferns for American Gardens* by John T. Mickel, is both comprehensive and accessible. With detailed descriptions of more than 400 ferns and 350 photographs, this book offers enough to satisfy any fern collector, but there is plenty of practical advice for gardeners who just want to grow ferns. American Gardener 20040401 Need help selecting ferns and keeping them happy?...John T. Mickel describes 400 kinds of ferns and their needs. -- Jan Riggenbach Omaha World-Herald 20040527 A labor of love...highly recommended with reservations. -- Lynn C. Westney E-Streams 20040616 Provides an encyclopedic treatment of more than 400 kinds of ferns. CoastStyle 20040916 A welcome addition. -- Kerry D. Heafner Plant Science Bulletin 20041014 Another treasure from Timber Press. -- Ethel Fried Manchester (CT) Journal Inquirer 20040925 If there is a name of a fern on your plant list, odds are very good it will be described in this book. -- Richard Poffenbaugh Mansfield News Journal 20041210 [Mickel] introduces gardeners to a treasure trove of hardy ferns... Color photos illustrate fascinating differences in frond shapes and sizes, enticing adventurous gardeners to try new varieties. -- Marge Hols St. Paul Pioneer Press 20050514 He introduces gardeners to a treasure trove of hardy ferns, writing from experiences in his home garden and as curator of ferns at the New York Botanical Garden for 35 years. -- Marge Hols St. Paul Pioneer Press 20050516 About the Author John T. Mickel grew up in Hudson, Ohio, earned his bachelor's degree at Oberlin College, and his master's and doctorate at the University of Michigan. He taught botany at Iowa State University at Ames for eight years before going to the New York Botanical Garden as curator of ferns in 1969. His scientific research concentrates on the ferns of Mexico, and his horticultural interests

include the testing of hardy ferns from temperate parts around the world. He lives in New York City.