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The Best of Every Season

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern

Athyrium niponicum 'Crested Surf'



Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 22 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 3

Other Names: Crested Japanese Painted Fern

Description:

An excellent choice for adding fine textures to shaded garden beds and borders; features a low growing habit with arching silvery green fronds with double crested tips and deep red midribs; easy to grow, requiring little to no maintenance

Ornamental Features

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern is primarily valued in the garden for its cascading habit of growth. Its attractive ferny bipinnately compound leaves emerge deep purple in spring, turning grayish green in color with showy white variegation and tinges of silver throughout the season. The burgundy stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern is a dense herbaceous fern with a shapely form and gracefully arching fronds. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. 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.

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern will grow to be about 22 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers to grow in moist to wet soil, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Crested Surf Japanese Painted Fern is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. 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.