

royal fern

Osmunda spectabilis

FEATURES

The royal fern is a large plant that can grow to six feet tall. Its leaves are in erect clusters and are divided into six or more pairs of leaflets. Each leaflet is further divided into eight or more pairs of widely-spread, rounded subleaflets. The fertile leaves have light-brown, spore-bearing leaflets at the tip. The yellow or green rachis is thin. The smooth, yellow stipe is nearly round.

BEHAVIORS

The royal fern may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in swamps, woods and on sandstone ledges. Spores are produced from April through June.

TAXONOMY

Kingdom: Plantae
Division: Pteridophyta
Class: Filicopsida
Order: Polypodiales
Family: Osmundaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native

ILLINOIS RANGE



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Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

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

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none