

Shade enhances both beauty and comfort of residential landscapes. Not all landscape plants, native or exotic, thrive in shady locations, however. Ferns grow well in partial or full shade and vary by size, color, and texture. The popular Boston fern, *Nephrolepis cordifolia*, is invasive; it was developed in the early 20th century from the gorgeous Florida native sword fern, *Nephrolepis exalta*, becoming a popular accent for parlors. The invasive Boston fern has small bulbs on its roots, which distinguish it from the native sword fern. Plant the native sword fern or try the giant version, *Nephrolepis biserrate*. For a lower growing plant, consider the native Maidenhair fern, *Adiantum spp.* The cinnamon fern, *Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*, is great near streambeds or in swampland. For partial shade, consider the Southern shield fern, *Thelypteris kunthi*, which turns bronze in autumn. Another lovely native for partial shade is the coontie, *Zamia floridiana*, not a fern but with a similar look.



Bulbs on invasive Boston fern. Source: UF IFAS



Invasive Boston fern. Source: UF IFAS



Florida native sword fern Source: UF IFAS



Maidenhair fern Source: UF IFAS



Cinnamon fern
Source: UF IFAS



Southern shield fern
Source: UF IFAS



Coontie
Source: UF IFAS