PLANT FACT SHEET

Onoclea sensibilis L.

GENUS *Onoclea* **FAMILY** Aspleniaceae

COMMON NAMES Sensitive fern, Bead fern

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fronds, Leaves, Root

The rhizome or underground stem is eaten.
The young leaves or fiddleheads are boiled and eaten. They are seasoned with salt, pepper and butter.

DESCRIPTION

A deciduous fern. It grows 30-60 cm high and can spread indefinitely sideways. The sterile fronds are bright green. They can be bronze-pink in spring and yellow in autumn. They are large and broad like an oak leaf. The fertile fronds with spores are stiffly upright and are shorter. They are like a small cluster of green balls. They turn dark brown.

HABITAT

A temperate plant. It needs to grow in shade. It does best in moist, preferably acid soil. It does well beside water. It scrambles on wet soils and very shallow water. It is frost hardy. It suits hardiness zones 4-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from spores or by division of the clump. Cuttings of the rhizome can be planted into moist soil.

NOTES

There are about 3 Onoclea species. It is also put in the families /Onocleaceae/Aspidiaceae/Dryopteridaceae. Also put in the family Athyriaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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