

# Holly Fern

## *Cyrtomium falcatum*

Holly fern is named for the pointy tips on its leathery leaves. This fern thrives in low light so it's ideal for shady areas and in pots on covered patios. It's an attractive yet low-maintenance plant that is deer-resistant. It makes an excellent understory plant beneath old reclaimed plants like camellia, sweet olive, and other large shrubs which have had their lower branches removed. Holly fern's dark green color makes for a great background when grouped with more colorful plants. Holly fern will stay green year-round in climates where it's protected from frost, however colder temperatures will cause the fern to lose its fronds. The fronds can be used in cut flower arrangements.

**Type:** perennial

**USDA hardiness zones:** 6 through 11

**Uses:** border; mass planting; ground cover; container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; accent; woodland garden

**Origin:** not native to Florida

**Height:** 2 to 3 feet      **Spread:** 2 to 3 feet

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

**Light requirement:** full shade to part sun

**Soil tolerances:** slightly acid; clay; sand; loam; loose; fertile; moist

**Drought tolerance:** low

**Soil salt tolerances:** moderate

**Invasive potential:** low

**Pest resistance:** pest and disease resistant provided that the soil is well drained

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Photo: UF/ IFAS