**Fern Identification**

The following is a list of fern taxa that you will be required to know. Use the information below and the specimens in lab to find characters that would allow you to identify them if you were in the field. If you are having trouble with the vocabulary, use Radford, *Plant Identification Terminology* (the yellow book) or ask your TA.

*Asplenium platyneuron* – Aspleniaceae – Ebony spleenwort

Fronds: +/- dimorphic; pinnate; rachis reddish or purplish brown; fertile fronds are erect while sterile fronds are arching and much shorter

Pinnae: numerous (15-45 pairs); conspicuous auricle overlapping rachis

Petioles: Reddish brown; lustrous

Sori: 1-12 pairs per pinna; inframedial; either side of midvein

Indusia: Laterally attached

*Woodwardia areolate* – Blechnaceae – Chain fern

Fronds: Dimorphic; sterile frond pinnatifid; fertile frond pinnate

Pinnae: Sharply contracted on fertile blade

Petioles: Reddish brown proximally, straw-colored distally

Sori: Sunken into blade; occupy nearly full breadth of blade, linear

Indusia: Flap-like; tucked under sporangia

*Pteridium aquilinum* – Dennstaedtiaceae – Bracken fern

Fronds: Bipinnate-pinnatifid, occasionally Tripinnate

Note: There are no sori present on any of our specimens, but the leaf morphology is unique. Student really shouldn’t need any other distinguishing features.

*Athyrium filix-famina*– Dryopteridaceae – Southern Lady Fern

Fronds: Pinnate-pinnatifid to 2-pinnate-pinnatifid

Pinnae: Base truncate; apex acuminate

Petioles: Straw colored with brown or light brown scales

Sori: In single row between midvein and margin

Indusia: Well developed; ciliate

*Polystichum acrostichoides* – Dryopterdiaceae – Christmas fern

Fronds: Once pinnate; fertile portion apical on reduce pinnae

Pinnae: Auricled on upper side

Petioles: Densely orange-brown scaly

Sori: Round and in two rows on either side of midvein

Indusia: Peltate (look at fresh specimens)

*Onoclea sensibilis* – Onocleaceae – Sensitive fern

Fronds: Dimorphic; sterile fond is proximally pinnate to pinnate-pinnatifid and distally pinnatifid; fertile frond is 2-pinnate

Pinnae: Strongly revolute and forming hardened bead-like structures on fertile blade; Entire margins

Sori: Enclosed by ultimate segments of pinnae

Indusia: Vestigial but difficult to see in mature blade

*Pleopeltis polypodioides* – Polypodiaceae – Resurrection fern

Fronds: Pinnatifid; deltoid and small (<10 cm)

Pinnae: Margins entire with rounded apex; surface covered with peltate gray scales (easily confused with sori to the untrained eye)

Sori: Submarginal

Indusia: Apparently absent

Habit: Exclusively epiphytic

*Adiantum pedatum* – Pteridaceae – (Northern) Maidenhair fern

Fronds: Pedate, recurved along dichotomously branched rachis

Pinnae: Oblong, petiolulate and arising along one side of principal rachis

Petioles: Lustrous red-brown; glabrous

Sori: Marginal on pinnae lobes

Indusia: False linear indusia comprised of recurved leaf margins

*Phegopteris hexagonoptera* – Thelypteridaceae – Beech fern

Fronds: Distinctly triangular; twice pinnatifid (occasionally thrice pinnatifid)

Petioles: Primary rachis winged; Rachis and pinna midvein pilose

Sori: Small and subterminal on veins

Indusia: Absent