

Saving Broad Beech Fern:

What you can do to help

Broad Beech Fern (*Phegopteris hexagonoptera*) is an understory species of deciduous forests. It is very similar to the more common Northern Beech Fern (*Phegopteris connectilis*).

Do you live near Broad Beech Fern?

Broad Beech Fern is found only in southern Ontario and southern Quebec. Broad Beech Fern grows in maple forests with moist or wet soils. It prefers shade and thrives in forests with a closed canopy.

What you can do to help

- ✓ **Learn to identify this plant.** If you are lucky enough to discover a new population of Broad Beech Fern, be sure to report it to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.
- ✓ **Do not collect this plant** or its parts for medicinal, ornamental or any other uses.
- ✓ **Take care during maple syrup harvesting.** Avoid driving vehicles, placing equipment and trampling in Broad Beech Fern habitat, which is typically very moist or even flooded in early spring. Contact your local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or Conservation Authority office for additional advice if you are considering maple syrup harvest near Broad Beech Fern populations.
- ✓ **Avoid logging** near Broad Beech Fern populations as it reduces shade and moisture required for growth. Here are a few tips if you need to harvest:
 - Consult with your local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authority or Woodlot Association before logging near the Broad Beech Fern populations.
 - Maintain at least a 30m vegetation buffer zone between the cut area and the Broad Beech Fern population.



Photo credit: Arie Tal (www.nttlphoto.com)



Photo credit: Janet Novak

Note “wings” on midvein between lowest and second-lowest pair of leaflets

Field check

- ✓ Height: up to 50 cm
- ✓ Leaf: 20-40 cm long; triangular shape; 24 or more leaflets; lowest pair of leaflets tapered on both ends; midvein winged between lowest and second-lowest pair of leaflets
- ✓ Petiole (leaf stem): slender 15-20 cm long, smooth and straw coloured above; dark scaly base.
- ✓ Similar Species: the midvein between the lowest and second lowest pair of leaflets on the similar Northern Beech Fern doesn't have green “wings”.

More Best Stewardship Practices

- ✓ **Stay on designated trails** when walking, cycling or driving an off-road vehicle in a natural area to avoid trampling vegetation and damaging sensitive habitat.
- ✓ **Keep your pets on a leash** when you walk them in natural areas, as pet hair can transport invasive plant seeds.
- ✓ **Learn to identify invasive species.** Your local Conservation Authority or Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Office can provide you with information on invasive species that occur in your area and what you can do to help prevent their spread.
- ✓ **Avoid dumping waste of any kind in natural areas.** Garbage damages plants, pollutes the environment and may introduce invasive species.
- ✓ **Learn about stewardship activities** in your area and actively participate in protecting Species at Risk. To find more information about stewardship activities in your area, contact your local Stewardship Council or Conservation Authority.
- ✓ **Take advantage of the Environmental Farm Plan program.** To learn more, contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
- ✓ **Report any illegal activity** related to plants and wildlife to 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)

Did you know?

If you have Species at Risk on your property, you may be eligible for stewardship programs or financial incentives that support the protection and recovery of Species at Risk and their habitats. Contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for more information.

Status

Broad Beech Fern is a species of Special Concern nationally and provincially.

Carolinian Canada Coalition is working with local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Offices, Conservation Authorities and other Non-Governmental Organizations to recover Broad Beech Fern.

You can help the recovery efforts by protecting this species and its habitat.

Good sources of information

Carolinian Canada Coalition:

www.carolinian.org

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources:

Includes information about Ontario Species at Risk

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/

Natural Heritage Information Centre

<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>

Find your local Conservation Authority Office:

www.conservationontario.ca

Government of Canada Species at Risk Public Registry:

www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Find your local Stewardship Council:

www.ontariostewardship.org

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Includes information about the Environmental Farm Plan

ontariosoilcrop.org



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