

***Polystichum munitum*, Sword Fern**

General Botanical Characteristics

Polystichum munitum is a large, evergreen, long-lived fern with fronds from 20 to 72 inches (50 cm-180 cm) long. They are divided pinnately. Individual fronds live for several years and remain attached to the rhizome after withering. The largest leaflets are 1.2 to 16 inches long (3 cm -15 cm). Spores are born in clusters called sori that are found between the midline and the edge of the middle and upper leaflets.



Seasonal Development

Fronds unroll by late May. Spores are near maturity by late July



Distribution/Habitat

Sword Fern can be found growing in shade or in small openings within moist coniferous forests.

Interesting Facts

- Western sword fern frequently indicates productive, moist forest habitat types. It may also indicate deep soils.
- Western sword fern is an indicator of high quality sites for black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).

References

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/fern/polmun/>

<http://www.clunet.edu/wf/nca/flowers/fwr-200.htm>

Photo from <http://bss.sfsu.edu/.../courses/Fall00Projects>