

Osmunda regalis

[Synonyms : *Aphyllocalpa regalis*, *Osmunda capensis*, *Osmunda longifolia*, *Osmunda mexicana*, *Osmunda obtusifolia*, *Osmunda palmeri*, *Osmunda palustris*, *Osmunda regalis* var.*brevifolia*, *Osmunda regalis* var.*capensis*, *Osmunda regalis* var.*longifolia*, *Osmunda regalis* var.*obtusifolia*, *Osmunda regalis* var.*spectabilis*, *Osmunda schelpei*, *Osmunda spectabilis*, *Osmunda spectabilis* var.*brasiliensis*, *Osmunda transvaalensis*, *Struthiopteris regalis*]

ROYAL FERN is a deciduous, perennial fern. Native from northern temperate areas to Africa and South America it has yellowish-brown stemmed, large green fronds.

It is also known as Blooming fern, Bog onion, Buckhorn, Buckhorn brake, Buckhorn male fern, Christopher's herb, Ditch fern, Fern, Fern brake, Flowering brake, Flowering fern, Hartshorn bush, Heart of osmund, Herb Christopher, Hog onion, Kidney fern, King's fern, *Königsfarn* (German), *Koningsvaren* (Dutch), *Kungsbräken* (Swedish), Male fern, *Osmundo reĝa* (Esperanto), Osmund the waterman, *Podezřeň královská* (Czech), Royal flowering fern, Royal osmund, Rusty fern, *Saffabräken* (Swedish), *Safsa* (Swedish), St. Christopher's herb, and Water fern; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of reverie.

Regalis is Latin (royal, regal) meaning 'royal or of outstanding merit'.

A Scottish legend tells how a waterman named Osmund on Loch Tyne used a bed of royal fern as a hiding place to evade invading Danes.

Royal fern is dedicated to St. Christopher.

This fern was familiar to some of the American Indian tribes and the Seminole and Menominee are believed to have included the roots among their medicinal ingredients. In the Iroquois tribe it seems to have been prescribed primarily for women and children, the former as a remedy for various kidney, blood and period disorders, and the latter for treating intestinal worms.

Today the hairs of young fronds (like that from cinnamon fern, *Osmunda cinnamomea*) provide material for making raincoat textiles in Japan.

Medicinally, the dried roots were recommended by herbalists for treating female ailments, dysentery, rickets, rheumatism, coughs, wounds, sprains and bruises.