

Fern Glossary

Bipinnate	Branching pattern where fern leaf is divided twice (pinnae are divided into pinnules). Sometimes also referred to as 2 times pinnate (see fig.2& 3). E.g. male ferns, shield ferns.
Fronde	The above ground part of the plant (leaf blade and stem)
Indusia (indusium sing.)	Thin membrane covering the sori to protect the sporangia , see fig.1.
Pinnate	Branching pattern where fern leaf is divided once into distinct pinnae segments (fig.1)E.g.polypodyand hard fern.
Pinnae (pinna sing.)	A division of the fern leaf, in pinnate, bipinnate and tripinnate ferns. See fig.2
Pinnule	Division of pinnae in bipinnate and tripinnate ferns (fig.2)
Pinnulet	Division of pinnules in tripinnate ferns (fig.2)
Rachis	The name for the fern's midrib (stem section within the leafy part of the frond). See fig.3.
Rhizome	Rooting stem from which the fern grows, see fig.3.
Scale	Scales found on the stipe , sometimes extending up the rachis . See fig.3. Usually brown and translucent, and may be useful in identifying similar species, e.g. buckler ferns.
Sori (sorus sing.)	The 'dots' on the underside of the frond , made up of clusters of sporangia . The sori are covered by the protective indusia when young. See fig.1.
Sporangia	Spore capsules. They form clusters, known as sori . See fig.1.
Stipe	The name for the fern's stem below the leafy part of the plant, also sometimes called the petiole or stalk. See fig.3.
Tripinnate	Branching pattern where leafis divided three times (pinnae are divided twice - into pinnules , then into pinnulets) see fig.2. Sometimes referred to as 'three-times pinnate', see fig.3. E.g. broad buckler fern, bracken.

Figure 1: Underside of fern showing reproductive structures

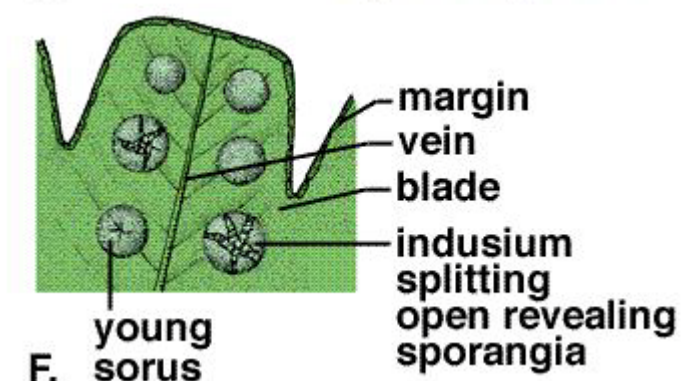


Figure 2: Fern branching patterns

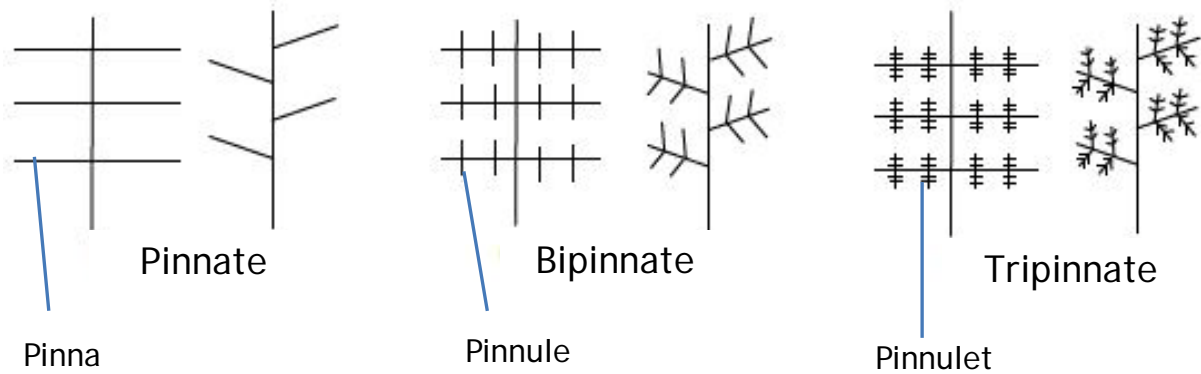


Figure 3: Fern anatomy

