FAMILY TREE NURSERY

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern

Asplenium 'Austral Gem'



Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Spleenwort

Description:

This sterile variety produces feathery, deep green glossy foliage with a waxy cuticle that prevents drying; does not produce messy spores, making it ideal for indoor containers

Ornamental Features

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern is primarily valued in the garden for its cascading habit of growth. Its attractive glossy ferny bipinnately compound leaves remain dark green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern is an herbaceous annual with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

8424 Farley St.
Overland Park, KS 66212
913.642.6503

7036 Nieman
Shawnee, KS 66203
913.631.6121

830 W Liberty Dr.
Liberty, MO 64068
816.781.0001

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Planting & Growing

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 18 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this slow-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Austral Gem Bird's Nest Fern is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a canvas of foliage against which the thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.