

BRITISH MALE FERNS	<i>Dryopteris oreades</i>	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	<i>Dryopteris borrieri</i>	<i>Dryopteris cambrensis</i>
DARK PATCH <i>Brown-purple colouration beneath frond where costa joins rachis</i>	Absent. Sometimes a 'smudge' on older plants or late in season. Rarely visible from above.	Absent. Frequently <u>present</u> on older plants or late in season. Rarely visible from above.	Present. Usually also visible from above. Often continuous with rachis coloration.	Present. Usually also visible from above. Rarely continuous with rachis coloration.	Present. Usually also visible from above. Sometimes continuous with rachis coloration.
FRONDS <i>Length when sori present</i>	40-50(-80) cm	40-150 cm	40-150(-200) cm	40-150(-200) cm	40-150(-200) cm
PINNAE <i>Rotation from plane of frond</i> <i>Pinnae adjacent to rachis</i>	Zero or slight rotation Slightly longer than next pair	Zero to rotation of <60° Up to 2/3 longer than next pair	Zero or slight rotation Slightly longer than next pair	Zero or slight rotation Slightly longer than next pair	Zero to rotation of <90° Up to 2/3 longer than next pair
PINNULES					
<i>Outline</i>	Oblong, parallel-sided	± Lanceolate, tapering	Oblong, parallel-sided, tapering in very large plants	Oblong, parallel-sided, tapering in large plants	Oblong, parallel-sided, tapering in large plants
<i>Habit</i>	Irreg. twisted, ± concave, 'crisped'	± Flat (margin slightly recurved)	± Flat (margin slightly recurved)	± Flat (margin slightly recurved)	± Flat (margin slightly recurved)
<i>Margin</i>	± Entire (large plants as <i>D. f-m</i>)	With deep, acute lobes	± Entire	± Entire to lobed	Usually with blunt lobes
<i>Apex shape</i>	Rounded	Usually pointed	Rounded (occasionally square)	Square; some or many round or pointed on large plants	Usually pointed, occasionally rounded
<i>Apical teeth</i> (lens)	Inconspicuous, blunt	Conspicuous, broad, pointed	Blunt, usually inconspicuous	Conspicuous, narrow, acute	Conspicuous, blunt
<i>Attachment of lowest two pinnules on frond, next to rachis</i>	Not relevant	Not relevant	Adnate: partly or wholly attached to costa along one side	Stalked: not or barely attached to costa	Not relevant
SORI					
<i>Distribution</i>	Mostly confined to half or less of pinnule surface along costa	Usually covering at least two thirds of pinnule	Usually covering at least two thirds of pinnule	Usually covering at least two thirds of pinnule	Usually covering at least two thirds of pinnule
INDUSIA					
<i>Thickness</i> thin 1-5 thick (lens)	Thick 4	Very thin 1	Very thick 5	Thin 2-3	Variable 2-5, thin at margin
<i>Early Season</i> (lens)	Tucked under sporangia	At least part of margin spreading and appressed to pinnule surface	Tucked under sporangia	Tucked under sporangia	Tucked under sporangia
<i>Mid Season</i> (lens)	Lift irregularly, often with circumferential constriction ('mob-cap')	Shrivel irregularly and roll up	Too thick to lift or shrivel, therefore split radially	Shrivel & roll into narrow inverted cone ('chanterelle')	Crinkle around margin ('pie-crust') variously lift, roll and split
<i>Late Season</i> (lens)	Not shed.	Shed as spores released.	Not shed.	Mostly shed.	Some shed.
<i>Winter</i> (lens)	Most retained on old fronds	Few retained on old fronds	Most retained on old fronds	Few retained on old fronds	Many retained on old fronds
<i>Glands</i> (microscope)	Few & minute, at margin	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent
"JIZZ" FACTORS	** ! CAUTION ! **	SUBJECTIVE	CHARACTERS	PLEASE USE WITH	DISCRETION
HABITAT	Upland Rocks and scree	Woodland, wayside, gardens etc.	Mostly open situations	Mostly woodland	Open & woodland
STIPE & RACHIS					© James Merryweather, 2006
<i>Thickness</i> slender 1-5 stout	3	3	5	2	4
<i>Erectness</i> arching 1-5 erect	5	<i>shade</i> 2-5 <i>open</i>	5	<i>shade</i> 2-4 <i>open</i>	<i>shade</i> 3-5 <i>open</i>
<i>Scale Colour</i>	Pale brown/beige	Pale brown/beige	Golden/Red-brown	Pale brown/beige/black-brown	Cinnamon/Metallic golden
<i>Scale Density</i> sparse 1-5 dense	2-3	1-2	5	2-4	3-5
FROND APPEARANCE					
<i>Colour Early Season</i>	Grey-green	Grey-green	Yellow or golden-green	Yellowish-green	Yellow-green
<i>Colour Mid Season</i>	Greyish/yellowish mid-green	Mid to dark-green	Yellow-green (<i>in open</i>) Mid-green (<i>in shade</i>)	Greyish mid-green Darker green in shade	Greyish/yellowish mid-green Dark green (<i>shade</i>)
<i>Surface Texture</i>					
<i>'Finish'</i> dull 1-5 glossy	1-2	2-3	4-5	1-2	3-4(-5)
<i>'Feel'</i> soft 1-5 leathery	2-3(4)	2-3	5	1-2(-4 <i>in open</i>)	3-4(-5)
<i>Winter green</i> brown 1-5 green	1	1	4-5	2-3	3-5