

FERNS FOR TERRARIUM OR BOTTLE GARDENS

By Darla Harris
The Fern Plantation
Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

Who does not love that pop of nature in our homes, but growing plants in our humidity free homes in the Houston area can be a challenge. Glass containers can be found everywhere, stores carry miniature items, and the variety of ferns is amazing.

To name just a few, left to right below:



Adiantum (maidenhair ferns); **Davallia** (footed fern such as the rabbits foot fern); **Pteris ensiformis 'Victoriae'**; **Asplenium** (several miniatures ones to choose from) and **Selaginella**.

Getting started:

- A suitable container that can be sealed glass works best but a clear plastic can work too. With lid, plastic wrap or a clear plate.
- Perlite. Helps to prevent over watering. Place in the bottom of the container.
- Charcoal. Keeps the soil sweet. On top of the perlite or mix together.



NATURE'S WAY
RESOURCES
an organically based service company

www.natureswayresources.com

- Potting mix (moisten and microwave for 10 minutes on high let cool) or sphagnum moss. Evenly moist not wet.
- Place your fern into the soil mix.

Maintaining your terrarium:

- Don't over water. You should see condensation on the lid. If there is a lot of condensation may take the lid off part way and let it dry out some.
- Don't under water. If you do not see any condensation use a spray bottle of water and spray the sides of the container. Just moist.
- Don't fertilize your ferns. If you do see discoloration you can use 1/4 strength even number fertilizer.
- Temperature best about 70 to 80 degrees.
- Light you can place on a window seal provided it is not a west window. You can use artificial light by using a table lamp or fluorescent light.
- Do not place your terrarium on a heat source such as a TV or heater.

A sealed terrarium should be check for water every six months unless you see an issue with the condensation. If you should see a buildup of salt (a white crusting of the soil) just remove the affected soil and replace with fresh.