Fern in Focus—New York Fern

Theleptes noverboracensis (L.) Nieuwl.
Marsh Fern Family (Thelypteridaceae)
Melanie Choukas-Bradley

s the first raindrops of tropical storm Irene penetrated the tall forest canopy, I wound my way along tea-colored Rock Creek. Crossing the Fenwick Branch footbridge and passing a small skunk cabbage wetland, I walked some low hanging witch-hazel boughs and began to switchback into the upland woods. As Irene unleashed her first serious rain band, I noted signs of early autumn everywhere: the yellow axillary floral clusters of blue-stemmed goldenrod, the first ragged flower heads of white wood aster, some spiky jumpseed racemes, and many fallen tulip-tree leaves. Then a fresh pale green on the slope just above the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye. Delicate, shiny-wet, and trembling under the tropical rainfall, a zig-zag cluster of New York fern fronds formed the creek caught my eye.