

# Adiantum cunninghamii

## COMMON NAME

common maidenhair, Cunningham's maidenhair

## SYNONYMS

*Adiantum formosum* var. *cunninghamii* (Hook.) F.Muell.; *Adiantum trapeziforme* G.Forst.; *Adiantum affine* var. *chathamicum* Field; *Adiantum affine* var. *pullum* (Colenso) Domin; *Adiantum affine* sensu G.M. Thomson; *Adiantum formosum* sensu A.Rich.; *Adiantum pullum* Colenso

## FAMILY

Pteridaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Adiantum cunninghamii* Hook.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

## NVS CODE

ADICUN

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 116

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Kermadec, Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

## HABITAT

Common throughout in coastal and lowland forest, occasionally extending into upper montane forests. Usually found on banks, cliff faces and amongst boulders - especially on limestone, marble, basalt or andesite rocks.

## FEATURES

Tufted, terrestrial fern. Rhizomes, short- to long-creeping. Stipes and rachises glabrous. Fronds adaxially dark green or glaucescent, abaxially paler, glaucous green, ovate to elliptic. Lamina 100-350 x 50-240 mm, 2-3-pinnate at base, Ultimate segments stalked to one side, oblong, tending to curve acroscopically at apices, upper margins irregularly toothed, lower margins smooth, glabrous. Indusia kidney-shaped, glabrous.



Coromandel. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



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## SIMILAR TAXA

Could be confused with *A. fulvum*, and *A. viridescens*. From both it is immediately distinguished by the glabrous rather than hairy primary pinnae. However, in situations of uncertainty *A. fulvum* is easily distinguished by its glabrous rather than hairy ultimate segment undersides, and *A. viridescens* differs by the narrower often sickle-shaped, shiny, dark green, ultimate segments, and glabrous primary pinnae.

## FLOWERING

Not applicable - spore producing

## FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

## FRUITING

Not applicable - spore producing

## LIFE CYCLE

Minute spores are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Slow but once established easy. Best grown from spores which must be sown fresh. Spores may take several years to produce plants.

## ETYMOLOGY

**adiantum:** From the Greek a- 'without, lacking' and diantos 'moistened', the fronds of this fern are supposed to remain dry after submersion in water

**cunninghamii:** Named after Allan Cunningham (1791–1839) who was an English botanist and explorer, primarily known for his travels to Australia (New South Wales) and New Zealand to collect plants. Author of *Florae Insularum Novae Zelandiae Precursor*, 1837–40 (Introduction to the flora of New Zealand).

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (June 2005). Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. 2000: *New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants*. Auckland, David Bateman  
Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/adiantum-cunninghamii/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/adiantum-cunninghamii/>