

Asplenium appendiculatum subsp. appendiculatum

COMMON NAME

ground spleenwort

SYNONYMS

Asplenium terrestre Brownsey subsp. *terrestre*

FAMILY

Aspleniaceae

AUTHORITY

Asplenium appendiculatum (Labill.) C.Presl subsp. *appendiculatum*

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

ASPASA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 288

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (from Rotorua and near Pureora south), South Island (more common in the east), Stewart Island/Rakiura and Antipodes Islands. Also Australia and Tasmania.

HABITAT

Lowland to subalpine (rarely coastal). Mainly in forested areas but also colonising bluffs and rocky outcrops, often in grey scrub. Strictly terrestrial.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome short, erect, bearing dark brown subulate scales up to 15 × 2 mm. **Stipes** 50–150 mm long, brown below, green above, covered in subulate to narrowly triangular scales with long filiform apices. **Laminae** lanceolate to elliptic, 100–300 × 50–150 mm, dark green, leathery or very thick and fleshy, slightly drooping, bi- to tripinnate.

Raches green, scaly, prominently ridged. **Pinnae** 8–20 pairs, those at the base ovate, those above very narrowly ovate or elliptic, often with long relatively undivided acuminate apices, stalked, 30–100 × 5–30 mm, covered on underside in tiny scales. **Pinnules**: upper pinnules linear, entire and sessile; lower pinnules narrowly elliptic and pinnatifid or pinnate, up to 30 × 8 mm. **Sori** submarginal, 2–7 mm long.



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SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from *Asplenium flaccidum* G.Forst. by its strict terrestrial growth habit, being octoploid ($2n = 288$) rather than tetraploid ($2n = 144$) and by having a more or less erect frond and a larger spore size. It can be distinguished from *A. haurakiense* (Brownsey) Ogle by its allopatric distribution, and by the lack of a greatly elongated basal acroscopic pinnule on each pinna. *Asplenium appendiculatum* subsp. *appendiculatum* differs from *A. appendiculatum* subsp. *maritimum* (Brownsey) Brownsey by its preference for inland habitats, somewhat larger, lanceolate to elliptic fronds which tend to droop, more pinnae pairs, with those at the base ovate, and those above very narrowly ovate or elliptic, often with long relatively undivided acuminate tips; and by the lower pinnules being larger, and narrowly elliptic and pinnatifid to pinnate.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown. A very attractive fern which can be rather slow growing. Best in a large pot or planted in a deep, rich, moist soil in semi-shade. Prone to scale and mealy bug infections.

ETYMOLOGY

asplenium: From the Greek a- 'without' and splene 'spleen', a northern hemisphere species, the black spleenwort (*Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*), was once believed to be a cure for diseases of the spleen.

appendiculatum: Appendiculate, with small appendages or projections, hanging in small fragments

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (3 February 2005). Description from: Brownsey (1971).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey P.J. 1977. A taxonomic revision of the New Zealand species of *Asplenium*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 15(1): 39–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1977.10429618>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/asplenium-appendiculatum-subsp-appendiculatum/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/asplenium-appendiculatum-subsp-appendiculatum/>