

Asplenium polyodon

COMMON NAME

sickle spleenwort

SYNONYMS

Asplenium falcatum Lam.; *Asplenium adiantoides* var. *polyodon* (G.Forst.) C.Chr.; *Asplenium falcatum* var. *caudatum* sensu Allan; *Tarachia falcata* (Lam.) C.Presl; *Tarachia polyodon* (G.Forst.) C.Presl; *Trichomanes adiantoides* L.; *Asplenium forsterianum* Colenso; *Tarachia adiantoides* (L.) Nakai ex Tuyama; *Asplenium adiantoides* (L.) C.Chr.; *Asplenium caudatum* sensu Hook.f.; *Asplenium falcatum* sensu A.Rich.

FAMILY

Aspleniaceae

AUTHORITY

Asplenium polyodon G.Forst.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

ASPPOL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 144

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands, Manawatāwhi / Three Kings Islands, North Island, South Island (mainly western, in the east found as far south as Bull Creek on the coast south of Dunedin), Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands. Also Madagascar, Indo-Malaysian, Australia, and the Pacific Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. In scrub and dense forest, often as an epiphyte but also on rock outcrops, fallen logs and on the ground.



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WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome stout, short creeping, densely covered in red-brown, narrowly triangular scales up to 10 × 1 mm. **Stipes** 100–300 mm long, dark brown, stiff, densely covered in scales similar to but smaller than those of the rhizome.

Laminae lanceolate, 250–500 (or more) × 100–200 mm, dark green and glossy above, paler and dull below, frequently pendulous, pinnate. **Rachis** dark chocolate brown, very scaly. **Pinnae** 25 (or more) pairs, narrowly angular-ovate to ovate, sometimes with a large rounded basal acroscopic lobe, acuminate, doubly serrate, 50–100 × 10–20 mm, scaly and with prominent veins on underside. **Sori** often slightly curved away from the midrib, up to 2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Recognised by the simply pinnate frond which are > 30 mm wide; by the dark chocolate brown rachis; and by the pinnae irregularly and doubly serrate.

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Rather slow growing but a very attractive species which is excellent in a pot, on a shaded rock wall, or planted in a free draining, moist, fertile soil under tall trees.

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.

ATTRIBUTION

Description from: Brownsey (1977).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey PJ. 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>.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

MORE INFORMATION

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