

Asplenium shuttleworthianum

COMMON NAME

Shuttleworth's spleenwort

SYNONYMS

Asplenium flaccidum var. *shuttleworthianum* (Kunze) Hook.f.; *Asplenium bulbiferum* var. *shuttleworthianum* (Kunze) G.M.Thomson

FAMILY

Aspleniaceae

AUTHORITY

Asplenium shuttleworthianum Kunze

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

ASPSHU

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.288

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: SO, OL

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands group (Meyers, Raoul and McCauley Islands). A tropical species widespread in the Pacific and reaching its world southern limit on the Kermadec Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. In scrub, forest, or on shaded rock ledges. May be found either on the ground or as an epiphyte.

FEATURES

Rhizome short, erect, bearing red-brown, linear attenuate scales. Stipes up to 150 mm long, green above, brown below, sparingly covered in small linear scales with long filiform apices. Laminae oblong to elliptic, 150–900 × 100–250 mm, yellow-green, coriaceous, 3- to 4-pinnate. Raches green, almost lacking scales, prominently grooved. Pinnae ovate to narrowly ovate, acuminate, stalked, up to 120 × 50 mm. Secondary pinnae linear to lanceolate, up to 15 × 2 mm, often pinnatifid. Ultimate segments linear, subacute, slightly expanded in the region of the sori. Sori near tips of ultimate segments, solitary, broad, submarginal, c.2 mm long.



November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



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SIMILAR TAXA

Of the New Zealand asplenias this species is most likely to be confused with *A. appendiculatum* (Labill.) C. Presl which is not known from the Kermadec Islands but distinguished from its very glossy, bright to dark green more heavily divided fronds, its very large spores, and by the characteristic broadening of the ultimate pinnules in the region of the sori.

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

Easily grown. However, as it is cold sensitive it is best grown indoors. An excellent and very attractive pot plant. Like all other asplenias it is prone to scale and mealy bug infestations, which if let uncontrolled can be devastating.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted endemic at its world southern limit. Although not that common on the Kermadec Islands, this is natural rather than induced and there are no known threats.

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 Brownset (1977)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey, P.J. 1977: A taxonomic revision of the New Zealand species of *Asplenium*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 15: 39-86.

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

MORE INFORMATION

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