

Asplenium subglandulosum

COMMON NAME

blanket fern

SYNONYMS

Gymnogramma alpina Potts; *Gymnogramma rutaefolia* (R.Br.) Desv.; *Gymnogramma pozoi* var. *rutaefolia* (R.Br.) Hook. et Baker; *Ceterach rutaefolium* (R.Br.) Mett.; *Grammitis rutaefolia* R.Br., *Asplenium subglandulosum* (Hook. et Grev.) Salvo, Prada et Diaz subsp. *subglandulosum*; *Pleurosorus rutifolius* (R.Br.) Fée

FAMILY

Aspleniaceae

AUTHORITY

Asplenium subglandulosum (Hook. et Grev.) Salvo, Prada

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

PLERUT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 144

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, SO, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: SO

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North Island (inland Hawke's Bay (an old record), the north-west Ruahine Ranges, near Cape Palliser, and possibly also Cape Terawhiti), South Island (more widespread in the east from Marlborough south to Otago). Also Australia.

HABITAT

Coastal to subalpine (1–1400 m.a.s.l.), saxicolous, usually on dry, exposed and sunny rock faces or crevices and joints with little (if any) associated vascular plant cover.



Near Lowburn, Otago. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Bendigo, Otago. Sep 2006. Photographer: Leon R. Perrie, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reddish-green to red-brown hairy fern of dry or exposed rock crevices. **Rhizomes** short, erect, ascending, covered in scales. **Stipes and rachises** pale chesnut-brown to dark red-brown at base, green above, copiously invested in pale brown to red-brown, 0.1–2 mm long, non-glandular hairs. Stipe 5–70 × 0.5 mm diameter. **Fron**d lamina 1–2-pinnate, narrowly elliptic, 15–150 × 6–45 mm, dark brownish-green to brown-green, densely covered in pale brown non-glandular hairs. **Primary pinnae** in 3–11 pairs, flabellate, ovate or bluntly and broadly ovate; bases oblique to unequally cuneate, shortly stalked; margins dentate or more or less entire; apices obtuse or more or less rounded; longest pinnae near middle of frond, these 3–23 × 3–22 mm, divided into secondary pinnae; these up to 10 × 9 mm. Sori ≤ 5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

This species could not be confused with any other New Zealand fern. Its preference for exposed, dry rock faces and crevices, usually devoid of other vascular plants, the small tufted habit, and the almost velvety textured, brownish-green, 1–2-pinnate fronds copiously covered in reddish to red-brown non-glandular hairs are key characters enabling its immediate recognition in the field and herbarium.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

THREATS

A genuinely uncommon, naturally sparse fern. Although widespread it is easily overlooked and it is possible that some populations have been eliminated by quarrying. Because it is unusual, it is susceptible to overcollection by botanists, a factor which has threatened some populations in the recent past. It is quite likely that some populations are threatened by the spread of introduced weeds into its preferred cliff habitats. Nevertheless it would seem that these threats have had little impact on the species' overall distribution. Populations of this species should be carefully monitored to determine their long-term stability.

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.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (17 April 2011). Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey PJ, Smith-Dodsworth JC. 2000. New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants. David Bateman, Auckland, NZ. 168 p.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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