

Austroblechnum lanceolatum

COMMON NAME

lance fern, nini, rereti

SYNONYMS

Blechnum lanceolatum (R. Br.) J. W. Sturm; *Spicanta lanceolata* (R.Br.) Kuntze; *Stegania lanceolata* R.Br.; *Struthiopteris lanceolata* (R.Br.) Ching; *Lomaria doodioides* Brack.; *Lomaria lanceolata* (R.Br.) Spreng.; *Blechnum aggregatum* Tindale; *Blechnum doodioides* (Brack.) Brownlie; *Blechnum chambersii* Tindale

FAMILY

Blechnaceae

AUTHORITY

Austroblechnum lanceolatum (R.Br.) Gasper et V.A.O.Dittrich

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

BLECHA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 66

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. Also Australia and some Pacific Islands

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually inhabiting forested areas where it commonly grows along shaded river and streams sides, or within the spray zone of waterfalls; or forms a dominant part of the ground cover in riparian forest. It also very common in coastal and lowland forest on shaded cliff faces. It becomes especially luxuriant in limestone country where it is often a conspicuous fern of cave entrances and overhangs.



Wellington. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Young frond, Wellington. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

FEATURES

Rhizome erect to suberect. Fronds dimorphic, 0.12–0.65 m long, 20–100 mm wide, emergent fronds green, often tinged pinkish, mature fronds dark green, often tinged maroon. Stipe 0.02–0.15 m long, stramineous, becoming purple-black towards base; scales linear-lanceolate, subulate, broadly based, entire, reddish-brown. Lamina narrowly linear-lanceolate, pinnate with 17–40 or more pairs of pinnae. Rachis and costae stramineous, often dark purplish towards base on undersurface, glabrous or with very sparse short acuminate red-brown scales. Sterile pinnae oblong, weakly falcate, obtuse or acuminate, 15–32 × 5–10 mm, adnate with broad bases; margins crenate to serrate; basal pinnae shorter, more obtuse. Fertile pinnae linear, 12.0–45.0 × 1.0–2.5 mm, reduced and often sterile towards lamina base.

SIMILAR TAXA

Austroblechnum lanceolatum and *A. norfolkianum* are a species pair that need further taxonomic investigation. Exact distinctions between these species are difficult. Chambers & Farrant (1998) suggest that this is due to hybridism but the basis for that suggestion is not clear. Most field botanists distinguish these two species on the basis of distribution and ecology with *A. norfolkianum* known only from northern New Zealand where it is mostly found on offshore islands. In this area it is typically found on rodent-free, “sea bird” islands where it is a conspicuous member of the shaded forest floor of petrel colonies as well as the more usual shaded bank and cliff habitats. *Austroblechnum norfolkianum* usually has brighter green, succulent fronds without the darker pink or maroon pigmentation often seen in *A. lanceolatum*, and the pinna of *A. norfolkianum* are consistently falcate (those of *A. lanceolatum* less often so), while the fertile fronds of *A. norfolkianum* are said to be shorter than sterile ones (but this is not always the case - consider the image on this Fact Sheet taken by Jeremy Rolfe). However, none of these characters can be consistently applied. On the Kermadec islands only *A. norfolkianum* is known. *Austroblechnum lanceolatum* is easily distinguished from *A. membranaceum* (with which it often grows) by its larger size and longer, narrower pinna.

FLOWERING

N.A.

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

FRUITING

N.A.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh spores. Prefers a deep, moist soil in shaded conditions. Responds well to regular applications of lime.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Perrie et al. (2014) advocated for a broadened circumscription of Blechnaceae whereby a number of genera traditionally recognized as distinct from *Blechnum* were merged within it. However, this view has not met with universal acceptance (see Gasper et al. 2016) and does not seem to be followed worldwide (PPG 2016). From a New Zealand perspective the decision to merge *Doodia* in *Blechnum*, and rejection of *Diploblechnum* has not been universally accepted either e.g., Wilcox & Warden (2017), and as such it is considered appropriate to follow world opinion and accept the taxonomy of Gasper et al. (2016) and recommendations of the PPG (2016).

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (19 September 2012). Description adapted from Chambers & Farrant (1998)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Chambers, T.C.; Farrant, P.A. 1998: Blechnaceae. *Flora of Australia* 48: 359-384. ABRS/CSIRO Australia, Victoria
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- Perrie, L.R.; Wilson, R.K.; Shepherd, L.D.; Ohlsen, D.J.; Batty, E.L.; Brownsey, P.J.; Bayly, M.J. 2014: Molecular phylogenetics and generic taxonomy of Blechnaceae ferns. *Taxon* 63(4): 745-758.
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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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