Hymenophyllum cupressiforme

BIOSTATUS
Native

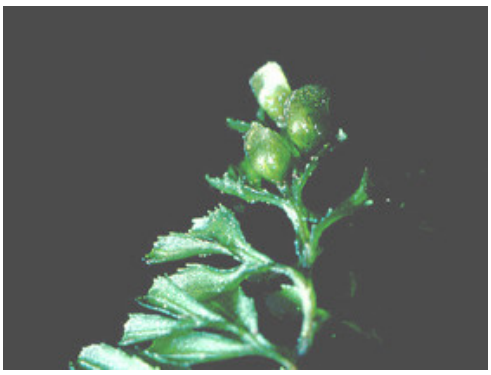
CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, SO
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Ferns

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Rhizome long-creeping, slender, pliant, glabrescent. **Fronds** 20–90 mm long. **Stipes** widely spaced, 5–40 mm long, usually narrowly winged, ± glabrous. **Lamina** dark green, elliptic-oblong, deeply 2-pinnatifid, 10–80 mm long × 10–25 mm wide; sometimes with a pair of shortly stalked basal pinnae present; secondary segments branching from both sides of the costae, simple or 2- or more times divided. **Ultimate segments** 05–1.0 mm wide; margins sharply toothed. **Sori** borne on short basal segments on the acroscopic side of the pinnae, solitary; involucre obovate, bilabiate, divided to the middle or below, 1.0–1.5 mm long, 1.3–2.0 mm wide, much wider than the ultimate segments; base cuneate, slightly immersed; margins ± entire to irregular, or finely toothed; receptacle included or slightly exserted. (Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

Rangitoto Island (September). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rangitoto Is. September. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
Most often confused with *Hymenophyllum revolutum* with which it sometimes grows, and from which it is distinguished by its winged rachises and less prominently toothed indusial flaps. In the montane part of its range it may be confused with *Hymenophyllum peltatum* from which it differs by having solitary sori, and by its secondary pinnae which arise on both sides of the primary pinnae.

DISTRIBUTION
Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island, South Island, Chatham Islands, from the Bay of Islands to south Canterbury. Most common in the Hauraki Gulf, south-eastern North Island (and in the Mangaharuru, Kaweka, Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges) and in North-west Nelson. Also in Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania).

HABITAT
Coastal to montane. Usually rupestral in lightly shaded habitats. Rarely a low epiphyte on tree trunks and exposed roots.

GENUS
Hymenophyllum

FAMILY
Hymenophyllaceae

AUTHORITY
Hymenophyllum cupressiforme Labill.

SYNONYMS
Hymenophyllum antarcticum C.Presl

ENDEMIC TAXON
No

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Minute spores are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Difficult—should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY
hymenophyllum: Membranous leaf, from the Greek humen and phullon

NVS CODE
HYMCUP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, SO
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Auckland: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, SO Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Bostock PD, Spokes TM. 1998. Hymenophyllaceae. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 116–148. ABRS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.
Brownsey PJ, Smith-Dodsworth JC. 2000. New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants. David Bateman, Auckland, NZ. 168 p.
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.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (16 April 2011). Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hymenophyllum-cupressiforme/

PDF DATE
27 May 2026