

Hymenophyllum peltatum

COMMON NAMES

one-sided filmy fern

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial or epiphytic fern forming thick patches on suitable substrates.

Rhizomes slender, filiform, long-creeping, much-branched, and interwoven. **FronDs** dark green (often red-green). **Stipes** 10–30 mm long, thin, glabrescent, not winged; rachises narrowly winged throughout (wing tapering toward base). **Laminae** glabrous, 20–100 × 10–25 mm, elliptic or narrowly ovate, 2-pinnate. **Ultimate segments** 3–6 mm long × 0.5–1.0 mm wide, linear, toothed, arising only on acroscopic side of primary pinnae. **Sori** 1–2–(3–5) borne on short branches arising on rachises acroscopic margin of each primary pinna. **Involucre** ovate to almost round, usually broader than the ultimate segment on which it is borne; indusial flaps entire (rarely finely crenate), receptacle included or slightly exerted. (Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *Hymenophyllum revolutum* with which it sometimes grows. However, *H. peltatum* is more usually found at higher elevations than *H. revolutum*. It is distinguished from *H. revolutum* by the completely winged rachis of the frond, secondary pinnae only arising on the acroscopic side of the primary pinnae, and by the 1–2–(3–5) sori which have smooth indusial and arise only on the primary pinna.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (from Mt Pirongia and Mt Te Aroha south), South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Macquarie Island. Also Australia.

HABITAT

Lowland to montane (rarely subalpine). In the North Island confined to montane and subalpine habitats. Usually in closed forest and scrub where it is epiphytic or found growing terrestrially on moss covered logs, mossy hummocks or on rocks.

GENUS

Hymenophyllum

FAMILY

Hymenophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Hymenophyllum peltatum (poir.) Desv.



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SYNONYMS

Hymenophyllum tunbridgense var. unilaterale (Willd.) G.M.Thomson; Hymenophyllum meyeri C.Presl;
Hymenophyllum unilaterale Willd.; Trichomanes peltatum Poir.

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 for the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

hymenophyllum: Membranous leaf, from the Greek humen and phullon

peltatum: Shield shape; from the Latin pelta

NVS CODE

HYMPEL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 52

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Bostock PD, Spokes TM. 1998. Hymenophyllaceae. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 116–148. ABRS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

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 (20 April 2011). Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hymenophyllum-peltatum/>

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25 May 2026