

Leptopteris hymenophylloides

COMMON NAMES

crêpe fern, single crêpe fern, heruheru

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Trunks up to 0.1 m tall. **Stipes** 0.15–0.5 m long, pale brown, sparsely hairy, with ear like lobes at base. **Fron**d delicate, membranous, translucent, laminae ± deltoid, 3-pinnate, 0.2–1.0m long, 150–350 mm wide, dark green to light emerald green, sparsely hairy, veins free. **Primary pinnae** in 20–30 pairs, widely spaced, basal ones 60–120 mm long. **Ultimate segments** linear, flattened in plane of frond. **Sporangia** scattered on underside of pinnae (not in discrete sori), though tending to be more abundant toward frond centre. (Description modified from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

SIMILAR TAXA

Leptopteris hymenophylloides differs from the closely related *L. superba* by its longer stipe, triangular frond, longer and broader pinnae, and by its ultimate lamina segments flattened in one plane. Where both species meet they commonly hybridise to produce the hybrid known as *Leptopteris xintermedia* (André) Brownsey.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (from North Cape (Whiriwhiri Stream) south), South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands. Common throughout, though more abundant in the northern part of its range.

HABITAT

Lowland to montane forest. Rarely in gumland scrub and coastal forest. Usually found along stream sides, and on damp banks, occasional on forested ridge lines. Once established this species is remarkably tolerant of drought and high light conditions and so it can be found growing as a persistent relict in disturbed forest or in areas cleared by wind throw.

GENUS

Leptopteris

FAMILY

Osmundaceae

AUTHORITY

Leptopteris hymenophylloides (A.Rich.) C.Presl



Sori. Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 14/08/2011, Licence: CC BY.



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 01/05/2011, Licence: CC BY.

SYNONYMS

Todea hymenophylloides A.Rich.; *Todea marginata* Colenso; *Todea pellucida* Carmich. ex Grev. et Hook.; *Leptopteris marginata* (Colenso) C.Chr.; *Osmunda hymenophylloides* (A.Rich.) J.B.Armstr.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

N.A.

FRUITING

N.A.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Minute spores are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al. 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a damp shaded site, in a free draining but moist, humus enriched soil.

ETYMOLOGY

leptopteris: Thin fern; from the Greek leptos and pteris

hymenophylloides: Resembling Hymenophyllum

NVS CODE

LEPHYM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT 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.

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.

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 10 March 2011. Description modified from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth 2000.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptopteris-hymenophylloides/>

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25 May 2026