

# Lygodium articulatum

## COMMON NAMES

mangemange, bushman's mattress, makamaka

## 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

Climbing fern. **Rhizomes** creeping, hairy. **Fron**d glabrous, high climbing. **Stipe and rachises** of indeterminate length, twisting and climbing to tops of surrounding vegetation, tough, wiry, pliant. **Sterile and fertile pinnae** markedly dimorphic, veins free. **Midribs of sterile pinnae** forked 2–3× ending in oblong secondary pinnae 40–100 × 5–20 mm, with rounded apices and smooth margins, adaxially bright green, abaxially glaucescent. **Midribs of fertile pinnae** forked many times, ending in fan-shaped lobule segments 5–10 mm long. **Sporangia** borne in spikes on the margins of lobule segments, each protected by an outgrowth of the lamina margin. (Description modified from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

## SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by the climbing twisting fronds arising from a long creeping rhizome, and which are usually interwoven into a dense tangle. These interwoven tangles make an excellent mattress and many a tramping has used these when caught out in the northern forests for the night. The only problem is that they are also a favoured home of tree wētā, as many-a-tramping-caught-out-in-the-northern-forest-for-the-night comes to appreciate!

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island from North Cape (Whiriwhiri Stream) south to Marokopa and the Bay of Plenty.

## HABITAT

Coastal and lowland to lower montane forest. Sometimes in gumland scrub.

## GENUS

Lygodium

## FAMILY

Lygodiaceae

## AUTHORITY

Lygodium articulatum A.Rich.

## SYNONYMS

Lygodium gracilescens Colenso



Trounson Kauri Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 09/12/1982, Licence: CC BY.



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## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

Not applicable - spore producing

## FRUITING

Not applicable—spore producing

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Once established *Lygodium articulatum* is easy to maintain, has rapid growth and soon forms an attractive “tangle” on a suitable host tree. It is not fussy about soil type but doesn't flourish in poorly drained soils, and should be planted in a partially shaded site where the fronds can grow up into the sun.

## CULTIVATION

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries

## ETYMOLOGY

**lygodium:** From the Greek lukos (wolf) and podion (foot)

## NVS CODE

LYGART

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.140

## 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.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

## 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/lygodium-articulatum/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026