

# Nephrolepis exaltata

## COMMON NAMES

southern sword fern

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

## DISTRIBUTION

Introduced and Naturalised. New Zealand: Auckland, Hamilton, Napier and Wellington. Indigenous throughout tropics.

## HABITAT

Urban areas and disturbed forest margins. Often a glasshouse 'weed'.

## GENUS

Nephrolepis

## FAMILY

Nephrolepidaceae

## AUTHORITY

Nephrolepis exaltata (L.) Schott

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## YEAR NATURALISED

2014

## ORIGIN

Unknown

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

An ornamental species

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and can be grown from spores. Indications are that this species, at least in the warmer parts of New Zealand is likely to be as invasive as *Nephrolepis cordifolia*.

## ETYMOLOGY

**nephrolepis:** Kidney scale



Mature fertile fronds of the crested race that is the most commonly seen morph wild in New Zealand. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 17/01/2017, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Nephrolepis exaltata growing as an epiphyte on Dicksonia squarrosa at Hamilton Zoo. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 17/01/2017, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Large M. 2016. Introduced *Nephrolepis* in New Zealand. *Trilepidea* 149: 4–5.

Large M, Farrington L. 2016. The *Nephrolepis* Boston fern complex (including *Nephrolepis exaltata* (L.) Schott), Nephrolepidaceae, naturalised in New Zealand. *Perspectives in Biosecurity Research Series 2*: 1–7.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (18 January 2017).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nephrolepis-exaltata/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026