

# Palhinhaea cernua

## SYNONYMS

*Palhinhaea polycephala* (Colenso) Holub; *Lycopodium cernuum* L.; *Lepidotis cernua* (L.) P.Beauv.; *Lycopodium polycephalum* Colenso; *Lycopodiella cernua* (L.) Pic. Serm.

## FAMILY

Lycopodiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Palhinhaea cernua* (L.) Franco et Vasc.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lycophytes (clubmosses, selaginella, quillworts)

## NVS CODE

LYCCER

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.200

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand. Kermadec, North, South, Chatham Islands (common from Te Pahi south to Lake Taupo thence scarce reaching a southern limit at about Okarito). Also Australia, Pacific Islands and throughout the tropics and subtropics.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane on clay banks, in gumland, on consolidated sand dunes, kauri clay podzols, road side banks, in thermal scrub and around active fumaroles and craters

## FEATURES

Terrestrial (rarely epiphytic) scrambling plants. Main stem up to 8 m long, creeping or looping over ground and rooting at points of contact. Aerial stems arising between rooting points, usually 1 per loop, 0.3-1(-2) m tall, dendroid, erect, much-branched, occasionally climbing, with apices curled over, glabrous or hairy. Sterile leaves spirally arranged to subwhorled, clustered, 1.5-5.0 mm long, 0.2-1.0 mm wide, linear to narrowly triangular, acuminate, curved towards shoot apices, green to yellowish green or yellow. Strobili numerous, solitary, terminal and sessile, 5-15 mm long, yellow. Sporophylls imbricate, ovate, acuminate, pale yellow; margins ciliate. Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).



Coromandel. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



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### **SIMILAR TAXA**

Easily distinguished from all other New Zealand representatives of the family by the extensive, looping main stems, "furry" aerial stems, and drooping strobili

### **FLOWERING**

N.A.

### **FLOWER COLOURS**

No flowers

### **FRUITING**

N.A.

### **PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE**

Easily grown from rooted pieces but resents root disturbance so needs to be transplanted carefully. Once established *Palhinhaea cernua* is remarkably tolerant of dry conditions. This species is frost sensitive.

### **ETYMOLOGY**

**cernua:** Drooping

### **ATTRIBUTION**

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 16 March 2011. Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. 2000: New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants. Auckland, David Bateman  
Chinnock, R.J. 1998: Lycopodiaceae. Flora of Australia 48: 66-85.

### **NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION**

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Palhinhaea cernua* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/palhinhaea-cernua/> (Date website was queried)

### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/palhinhaea-cernua/>