

Pseudolycopodium densum

COMMON NAMES

clubmoss

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lycophytes (clubmosses, selaginella, quillworts)

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome creeping, to 3 m long, clothed in slightly spreading scale leaves.

Branchlet systems erect, 0.1–1.0 m tall. **Leaves** spiral to subwhorled, imbricate, appressed or spreading, adnate, dimorphic, green, yellow-green to yellow. **Leaves of sterile branchlets** linear-lanceolate, attenuate, 2.0–4.5 mm long, spreading. **Leaves of sporogenous branchlets** ovate-lanceolate, attenuate, 1.0–2.5 mm long; margins membranous, translucent, ciliate around the base. **Leaves of central axis** (sporogenous and sterile) similar to those of sterile branchlets, but appressed, 4.5–6.0 mm long. **Strobili** terminal on ultimate branchlets, 10–35 mm long, solitary. **Sporophylls** imbricate, acute; margins membranous, fimbriate. (Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

SIMILAR TAXA

None. Easily recognised by the stout, erect, aerial branches which resemble a small conifer. *Pseudolycopodium densum* could possibly be confused with *Austrolycopodium fastigiatum* except that, *A. fastigiatum* is a species of montane habitats (it is never found growing with *Pseudolycopodium densum*), and the leaves on the branchlets of fertile specimens are not appressed as they are in *P. densum*.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (from North Cape to Lake Taupo and nearby river catchments), Chatham Islands. Also Australia and New Caledonia.

HABITAT

Coastal and lowland forests in gumland scrub, on forest margins and ridgelines (especially in kauri forest), or in open clay pans within tall forest.

GENUS

Pseudolycopodium

FAMILY

Lycopodiaceae



Tongariro River. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 11/09/1985, Licence: CC BY.



Tongariro River. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 11/09/1985, Licence: CC BY.

AUTHORITY

Pseudolycopodium densum (Rothm.) Holub

SYNONYMS

Lycopodium deuterodensum Herter; *Lepidotis densa* Rothm.; *Lycopodium densum* Labill.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Not applicable (spore producing)

FRUITING

Not applicable (spore producing)

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown with some difficulty. Best results have been achieved with plants grown on untreated saw dust.

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

NVS CODE

LYCDEU

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 68

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

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

Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available.

The Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

Northland: 2026 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available.

The Northland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Northland | Taitokerau”](#) Ford et al. 2026 report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Chinnock RJ. 1998. Lycopodiaceae. *Flora of Australia* 48, *Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 66–85.

ABRS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 17 March 2011. Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pseudolycopodium-densum/>

PDF DATE

25 August 2026