

Selaginella kraussiana

COMMON NAMES

Selaginella, African clubmoss

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lycophytes (clubmosses, selaginella, quillworts)

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small, carpet-forming groundcover. Roots long, fine. Stems creeping, slender, irregularly branched, rooting at nodes, forming loose mat. Leaves in rows, 2-4 mm. Spore cones rounded, 10 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Superficially similar to many native mosses and leafy liverworts. It is actually a fern-ally that bears small cones underneath the leaves.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A lowland plant of sites with moderate fertility. Occurs mainly in damp, shaded sites eg tall forest, low forest, scrub, forest margins and streambanks.

GENUS

Selaginella

FAMILY

Selaginellaceae

AUTHORITY

Selaginella kraussiana (Kunze) A. Braun

FLOWERING

N/A

YEAR NATURALISED

1919

ORIGIN

C&S Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental.

TOLERANCES

The plant is intolerant to drought and tolerant to shade and poor drainage. Resprouts after physical damage.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. The plant has an eternal life span as it just keeps growing. Spores are dispersed by wind, boots, feet, stock and machinery. Stem fragments can be dispersed by soil and water movement as well as human activities.



Taita, Lower Hutt. Aug 2001. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Licence: CC BY.



Selaginella kraussiana. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Spores are thought to be viable for more than a year (Carol West, pers. comm.). Reproduces sexually by releasing spores. Also reproduces vegetatively by creeping stems with adventitious roots. Spores are produced, in cones on the undersides of the leaves.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

SELKRA

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/selaginella-kraussiana/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026