

# Trichomanes colensoi

## COMMON NAME

Bristle fern

## SYNONYMS

Vandenboschia colensoi (Hook. f.) Copel., Polyphlebium colensoi (Hook.f.)  
Ebihara et K.Iwats.

## FAMILY

Hymenophyllaceae

## AUTHORITY

Trichomanes colensoi Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

## NVS CODE

TRICOL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 72

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Sparse

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. From Mt Karioi (Western Waikato) and Te Moehau (Coromandel Peninsula) south. Known from only one site on Rekohu (Chatham Island) in the Chatham Islands group.

## HABITAT

An uncommon fern that most commonly occurs on wet rock faces, usually within overhangs or beside streams in dark, wet, lowland to montane forest. It may also be found as a low epiphyte in cloud forest, or within holes amongst exposed roots, or on trees rooted over boulder falls. Often associated with *Trichomanes strictum* and *Hymenophyllum australe*.



Bull Creek, Akatarawa. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Akatarawa Range. Photographer: © John Braggins

## FEATURES

Colony forming, extensively rhizomatous fern of dark recesses, rock faces and overhangs usually near to or partially immersed in water. Rhizomes long creeping. Stipes 5-30 mm long. Stipe and rachises not winged, dark black, rather wiry and pliant. Frond lamina 30-120 x 10-30 mm, dark green (rarely bright green), narrowly elliptic, 2-3-pinnate. Primary pinnae widely spaced, stalked, finely divided; ultimate segments linear, deeply toothed, with the veins forking 1-2 times per segment. Sori distinctly stalked, usually solitary (sometimes paired) at bases of primary pinnae. Indusia tubular, widened at mouth.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Could possibly be confused with *Trichomanes endlicherianum* which often grows in similar habitats and has a superficially similar frond shape and morphology. However, *T. colensoi* differs from that species by the absence of a rachis wing, more deeply divided fronds and distinctly stalked indusia.

## FLOWERING

Not applicable - spore producing

## FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

## FRUITING

Not applicable - spore producing

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild

## THREATS

Not threatened. A naturally uncommon, biologically sparse species which may be abundant in suitable habitats and then absent from other apparently suitable sites nearby.

## ETYMOLOGY

**trichomanes:** From the ancient Greek name used by Theophrastus and Dioscorides, for a type of fern; refers to the slender hair projecting from each spore case

**colensoi:** Named after William Colenso (7 November 1811 - 10 February 1899) who was a Cornish Christian missionary to New Zealand, and also a printer, botanist, explorer and politician.

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Previously NZPCN had followed Ebihara et al. (2006) in recognising *Abrodictyum* as distinct from *Trichomanes* - recently Brownsey & Perrie (2016) have rejected this idea favouring a return to the past broad circumscription of *Trichomanes* used in New Zealand.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (July 2007). Description adapted from 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

Brownsey, P.J. & Perrie, L.R. 2016: Hymenophyllaceae. In: Breitwieser, I.; Heenan, P.B.; Wilton, A.D.

Flora of New Zealand - Ferns and Lycophytes. Fascicle 15. Manaaki Whenua Press, Lincoln.

Ebihara, A.; Dubuisson, J.-Y.; Iwatsuki, K.; Hennequin, S.; Ito, M. 2006: A taxonomic revision of the Hymenophyllaceae. *Blumea* 51: 2-57

## CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/trichomanes-colensoi/>