

Hymenophyllum revolutum

COMMON NAMES

filmy fern

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Epiphytic and/or terrestrial fern forming, in ideal situations, extensive turf-like patches. **Rhizomes** long-creeping, very thin, much-branched and interwoven, wiry when fresh, brittle when dry. **FronDs** light green. **Stipes** 5–30 mm long, thin, brittle, glabrescent, not winged; rachis narrowly winged in upper portion. **Laminae** 10–90 × 5–20 mm, narrowly elliptic to ovate, 2–3-pinnate. **Ultimate segments** linear to oblong, often forked, margins deeply toothed. **Sori** on short winged branches near rachis, 1 on acroscopic margin of each primary pinnae. **Indusial flaps** deeply toothed, teeth irregular. (Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

SIMILAR TAXA

Morphologically similar to *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme* and *H. peltatum*, species from which it is distinguished by its partially winged rachis and by the very deeply toothed indusial flaps.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Found throughout New Zealand usually in closed forest where it most commonly epiphytic but also found on rocks, cliff faces, fallen logs, on moss covered hummocks and sometimes on the ground.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Hymenophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Hymenophyllum revolutum Colenso

SYNONYMS

Hymenophyllum tunbridgense var. *cupressiforme* sensu Hook.; *Hymenophyllum pusillum* Colenso; *Hymenophyllum tunbridgense* sensu A.Rich.; *Hymenophyllum zeelandicum* Bosch

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/03/2017, Licence: CC BY.



Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 11/07/2006, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Minute spores are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult—should not be removed from the wild

OTHER INFORMATION

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

hymenophyllum: Membranous leaf, from the Greek humen and phullon

NVS CODE

HYMREV

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 72$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2024 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the [“Regional conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Otago”](#) Jarvie S et al. (2024) report.

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (20 April 2011). Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hymenophyllum-revolutum/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hymenophyllum-revolutum/>

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02 August 2025