

Notogrammitis heterophylla

COMMON NAMES

taupeka, comb fern

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Epiphytic or rupestral shortly rhizomatous fern forming tufted patches.

Frond produced in two rows. **Lamina** (25)–87–191–(300) mm long, (3)–18–57–(100) mm wide. **Pinnae** (3)–12–21–(36) pairs; longest pinnae (1)–10–40–(63) mm long, 1.5–7.5 mm wide, apically truncate to acuminate, herbaceous to thickly coriaceous; margins entire or with primary and secondary lobules; hairs 0.2–0.8 mm long, whitish to pale red-brown, catenate, simple, glandular to eglandular, or whitish to pale red-brown, forked, abaxially on rachis, sometimes on both surfaces of lamina and margins. **Sori** on (2)–8–15–(22) pairs of pinnae.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Manawatāwhi / Three Kings Islands, North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands, Auckland Islands. Also Australia.

HABITAT

Coastal to subalpine. Usually epiphytic but also common on cliff faces, boulders in forest and on sheltered rocks within talus and scree.

GENUS

Notogrammitis

FAMILY

Polypodiaceae

AUTHORITY

Notogrammitis heterophylla (Labill.) Parris

SYNONYMS

Grammitis heterophylla Labill.; *Xiphopteris heterophylla* (Labill.) Spreng.; *Gymnogramma billardi* Kaulf.; *Polypodium billardi* Fée; *Polypodium grammitidis* R.Br.; *Ctenopteris grammitidis* (R.Br.) J.Sm.; *Grammitis grammitidis* (R.Br.) Keyserl.; *Polypodium grammitidis* R.Br.; *Ctenopteris heterophylla* (Labill.) Tindale



Mount Thomas, Canterbury. March 1980.
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Licence: CC BY.



Puffer Track, Kaitoke. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 15/09/2006, Licence: CC BY.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

As *Ctenopteris heterophylla*, *Notogrammitis heterophylla* was always regarded as very similar to New Zealand *Grammitis* (all now *Notogrammitis*) from which it was largely distinguished by its divided frond. However, occasional hybrids between *Ctenopteris heterophylla* and both *Grammitis billardierei* and *G. ciliata* (now *Notogrammitis billardierei* and *N. ciliata* respectively), both with varying levels of fertility (i.e. not completely sterile) have been recorded from the wild (Parris 1977; de Lange & Rolfe 2011), and these suggested a very close relationship between *Ctenopteris heterophylla* and what is now *Notogrammitis*.

Subsequently the New Zealand species of *Grammitis* along with *Ctenopteris heterophylla* and one Australian *Grammitis* (*G. garrettii*) were transferred to a new genus, *Notogrammitis* Parris (Perrie & Parris 2012).

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Not applicable—spore producing

FRUITING

Not applicable—spore producing

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult—should not be removed from the wild

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

notogrammitis: From the Greek noto- 'southern' and gramma 'line', referring to this new genus of southern strap ferns which were previously in *Grammitis*.

heterophylla: Varied leaves; from the Greek heteros and phullon

NVS CODE

NOTHET

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 74

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

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.

Otago: 2025 | 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 [“Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025”](#) Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (Updated 10 April 2011). Description from Parris (1998)

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/notogrammitis-heterophylla/>

PDF DATE

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