

Hymenophyllum cupressiforme

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome long-creeping, slender, pliant, glabrescent. **Fron**ds 20–90 mm long. **Stipes** widely spaced, 5–40 mm long, usually narrowly winged, ± glabrous. **Lamina** dark green, elliptic-oblong, deeply 2-pinnatifid, 10–80 mm long × 10–25 mm wide; sometimes with a pair of shortly stalked basal pinnae present; secondary segments branching from both sides of the costae, simple or 2- or more times divided. **Ultimate segments** 0.5–1.0 mm wide; margins sharply toothed. **Sori** borne on short basal segments on the acroscopic side of the pinnae, solitary; involucre obovate, bilabiate, divided to the middle or below, 1.0–1.5 mm long, 1.3–2.0 mm wide, much wider than the ultimate segments; base cuneate, slightly immersed; margins ± entire to irregular, or finely toothed; receptacle included or slightly exserted. (Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).

SIMILAR TAXA

Most often confused with *Hymenophyllum revolutum* with which it sometimes grows, and from which it is distinguished by its winged rachises and less prominently toothed indusial flaps. In the montane part of its range it may be confused with *Hymenophyllum peltatum* from which it differs by having solitary sori, and by its secondary pinnae which arise on both sides of the primary pinnae.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island, South Island, Chatham Islands, from the Bay of Islands to south Canterbury. Most common in the Hauraki Gulf, south-eastern North Island (and in the Mangaharuru, Kaweka, Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges) and in North-west Nelson. Also in Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania).

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually rupestral in lightly shaded habitats. Rarely a low epiphyte on tree trunks and exposed roots.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

DETAILED TAXONOMY

GENUS

Hymenophyllum

FAMILY

Hymenophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Hymenophyllum cupressiforme Labill.



Rangitoto Island (September). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rangitoto Is. September. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SYNONYMS

Hymenophyllum antarcticum C.Presl

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

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

ETYMOLOGY

hymenophyllum: Membranous leaf, from the Greek humen and phullon

NVS CODE

HYMCUP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, SO

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, SO 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

Bostock PD, Spokes TM. 1998. Hymenophyllaceae. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 116–148. ABR/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

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 (16 April 2011). Description adapted from Bostock & Spokes (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

25 September 2025