

Pteris tremula

COMMON NAMES

shaking brake, tender brake, Australian bracken

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout terrestrial ferns. **Rhizomes** short, erect, apex covered with long narrow, pale brown scales. **Fronde**s dimorphic, tufted. **Stipes** 0.15–0.6 m long, glabrous (rarely with a few narrow basal scales), red-brown or black, often basally so and then red-yellow for rest of length. **Laminae** 0.3–1.2 × 0.2–0.7 m, bright green, yellow-green or yellow, ovate, ovate-deltoid, 3–4-pinnate at base, membranous, rachis red-brown or yellow-green. **Pinnae** overlapping; most secondary pinnae stalked or sessile. **Ultimate sterile segments** 6–38 × 3 mm wide, linear, apices blunt margins toothed; ultimate fertile segments 5–35 × 1–2 mm, linear, apices blunt, margins toothed. **Veins** free, simple or 1–2-forked. **Sori** ± continuous on a marginal vein, but absent from bases and apices of ultimate segments, protected by membranous inrolled pinna margins.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the other species of *Pteris* indigenous or naturalised in New Zealand by the lamina which has free veins, 3–4-pinnate laminae at the base and 3-pinnate at the middle. It is perhaps superficially most similar to the uncommon naturalised *Pteris dentata* Forssk.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands (Raoul, Meyers and Macauley Islands), Manawatāwhi / Three Kings Islands, North Island, South Island, Chatham Islands. Also Australia, Tasmania, Lord Howe, Norfolk and Fiji.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (in northern part of range) in open, dry forest, scrub, wasteland, along track and roadsides and on retaining walls and similar sites in built up areas.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Pteridaceae

AUTHORITY

Pteris tremula R. Br.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No



Abaxial surface of pinnule showing sori arranged along the margin. Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 21/04/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Pinnule showing free veins. Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 21/04/2007, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easily grown, often naturalising in gardens and becoming weedy (and may even self establish in urban areas from spores blown in from elsewhere). Very fast growing and tolerate of most conditions except waterlogged soils and heavy shade.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

OTHER INFORMATION

ETYMOLOGY

pteris: A fern known to the ancient Greeks; from the Greek pteris

NVS CODE

PTETRE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.240

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

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.

Kramer KU, McCarthy PM. 1998. Pteridaceae. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 241–248. ABRIS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (17 January 2012). Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000) and Kramer & McCarthy (1998).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pteris-tremula/>

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13 October 2024