

# Asplenium shuttleworthianum

## COMMON NAME

Shuttleworth's spleenwort

## SYNONYMS

*Asplenium flaccidum* var. *shuttleworthianum* (Kunze) Hook.f.; *Asplenium bulbiferum* var. *shuttleworthianum* (Kunze) G.M.Thomson

## FAMILY

Aspleniaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Asplenium shuttleworthianum* Kunze

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

## NVS CODE

ASPSHU

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.288

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp, TO

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: SO, OL

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands (Meyer Islands, Raoul Island, McCauley Island). A tropical species widespread in the Pacific and reaching its world southern limit on the Kermadec Islands.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane. In scrub, forest, or on shaded rock ledges. May be found either on the ground or as an epiphyte.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Rhizome** short, erect, bearing red-brown, linear attenuate scales. **Stipes** up to 150 mm long, green above, brown below, sparingly covered in small linear scales with long filiform apices. **Laminae** oblong to elliptic, 150–900 × 100–250 mm, yellow-green, coriaceous, 3- to 4-pinnate. **Raches** green, almost lacking scales, prominently grooved. **Pinnae** ovate to narrowly ovate, acuminate, stalked, up to 120 × 50 mm. **Secondary pinnae** linear to lanceolate, up to 15 × 2 mm, often pinnatifid. **Ultimate segments** linear, subacute, slightly expanded in the region of the sori. **Sori** near tips of ultimate segments, solitary, broad, submarginal, c. 2 mm long.



November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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## SIMILAR TAXA

Of the New Zealand asplenias this species is most likely to be confused with *A. appendiculatum* (Labill.) C.Presl which is not known from the Kermadec Islands but distinguished from its very glossy, bright to dark green more heavily divided fronds, its very large spores, and by the characteristic broadening of the ultimate pinnules in the region of the sori.

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown. However, as it is cold sensitive it is best grown indoors. An excellent and very attractive pot plant. Like all other asplenias it is prone to scale and mealy bug infestations, which if let uncontrolled can be devastating.

## THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted endemic at its world southern limit. Although not that common on the Kermadec Islands, this is natural rather than induced and there are no known threats.

## ETYMOLOGY

**asplenium:** From the Greek a- 'without' and splene 'spleen', a northern hemisphere species, the black spleenwort (*Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*), was once believed to be a cure for diseases of the spleen.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description from Brownset (1977)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey PJ. 1977. A taxonomic revision of the New Zealand species of *Asplenium*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 15(1): 39–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1977.10429618>.

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>.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/asplenium-shuttleworthianum/>