

Cheilanthes distans

COMMON NAME

woolly cloak fern, woolly rock fern

SYNONYMS

Notholaena distans R.Br.

FAMILY

Pteridaceae

AUTHORITY

Cheilanthes distans (R.Br.) Mett.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Ferns

NVS CODE

CHEDIS

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 116

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: Kermadec Islands (Macauley Island). Manawatāwhi / Three Kings Islands, North Island, South Island (mainly easterly south to Banks Peninsula). Also Australia and New Caledonia.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane in dry, rocky habitats with only sparse or no vegetation cover. Often found growing with *Asplenium flabellifolium*, *Cheilanthes sieberi* subsp. *sieberi* and *Pellaea calidirupium*. More common in the drier eastern parts of the country.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rupestral (rarely terrestrial) fern. **Fronde**s up to 350 × 30 mm; stipe red-brown or dark brown, with moderately dense to dense covering of brown scales and some hairs, rachis densely covered in scales. **Lamina** linear, 2-pinnate or 2-pinnatifid at base and for most of length; large pinnae triangular-ovate; pinnules oblong-elliptic; margins entire or lobed; adaxially sparsely to moderately densely covered with slender, white hairs and occasional caducous scales, very rarely glabrous; abaxially sparsely to densely covered in scales and sparse white hairs. **Spores** spherical, granulose and ridged, with echinate ornamentation, 43–79 µm diameter, 16 per sporangium.



Kennedy Bay, October. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mangatoetoe Stream, Aorangi Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/10/2010, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Cheilanthes sieberi* subsp. *sieberi* with which it often grows by the the stipes, rachises and primary pinnae being copiously covered in scales and hairs rather than glabrous (or nearly so).

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a dry sunny site. An excellent pot plant. In ideal conditions it soon self establishes.

ETYMOLOGY

cheilanthes: From the Greek kheilos 'lip' and anthos 'flower', referring to the indusium

distans: Distant (widely spaced female flowers)

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (Updated 3 May 2011). Adapted from Chambers & Farrant (1998)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Chambers TC, Farrant PA. 1998. *Cheilanthes*. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 271–286. ABRS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

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>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Cheilanthes distans* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cheilanthes-distans/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cheilanthes-distans/>