

Lateristachys diffusa

SYNONYMS

Lycopodium laterale var. *diffusum* (R.Br.) Hook.f.; *Lepidotis diffusa* (R.Br.) Rothm.; *Lycopodiella ramulosa* (Kirk) B.Øllg.; *Lycopodium diffusum* R.Br.; *Lycopodium ramulosum* Kirk; *Lateristachys ramulosa* (Kirk) Holub; *Lycopodiella diffusa* (R.Br.) B.Øllg.

FAMILY

Lycopodiaceae

AUTHORITY

Lateristachys diffusa (R.Br.) Holub

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lycophytes (clubmosses, selaginella, quillworts)

NVS CODE

LYCDIF

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (from the Raukumara Range southwards), South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham and Auckland Islands. Also Australia.

HABITAT

Lowland to alpine (mostly montane to alpine in northern part of range), in peat bogs, pakihi country, on coal measures, fell field and on poorly drained, nutrient impoverished soils.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Main stems up to 200 mm long, prostrate, rooting at intervals. Branchlet systems scattered along main stems, prostrate, appressed to substratum, but with tips upturned, dichotomously branched and ± rosette-forming, often imbricate. **Leaves** spirally arranged, imbricate, curved upwards, thick, 3.0–5.5 mm long, 0.5–0.8 mm wide, linear-subulate to linear-lanceolate, green and then often tipped reddish brown, or reddish brown. **Strobili** solitary, 6–16 mm long, dark reddish brown, lateral or terminal, sessile. **Sporophylls** imbricate, ovate, acuminate; bases coalescent; margins entire or with a few obscure teeth. (Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000)).



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



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SIMILAR TAXA

In its extreme state it is easily distinguished from the most common form of *Lateristachys lateralis* by its dichotomously-branched, prostrate stems. However, forms of *L. lateralis* growing in restiad peat in Waikato and on the Chatham Islands, and plants of *L. lateralis* in North-west Nelson appear to intergrade with *L. diffusa*. Australian treatments (e.g., Chinnock 1998) keep both species but, based on field observations in New Zealand, it would seem that the status of *L. diffusa* needs to be investigated further.

FLOWERING

N.A.

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

FRUITING

N.A.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Transplants can be grown moderately easily if planted in peat within a pot which is then kept partially immersed in a tub of water.

ETYMOLOGY

diffusa: Of spreading growth

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 16 March 2011. Description adapted from Chinnock (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Brownsey PJ, Smith-Dodsworth JC. 2000. New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants. David Bateman, Auckland, NZ. 168 p.

Chinnock RJ. 1998. Lycopodiaceae. *Flora of Australia 48, Ferns Gymnosperms and allied groups*: 66–85. ABRS/CSIRO Victoria, Australia.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lateristachys-diffusa/>