

Alsophila baileyana

Family:

Cyatheaceae

Botanical name

Alsophila baileyana Domin

Link to Australian Plant Name Index for publication details and synonyms:

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/83444>

Description

Rhizome erect, to 5 m tall, 5–10 cm diam. Stipe dark red (rachis similar), c. 15 cm long; base densely covered with scales; scales variable in size; larger scales 15–25 mm long, 1–2 mm wide, dark purple, brown or black, with narrow, fragile margins and filiform apices; pneumathodes on base of stipe deeply excavate, on rachis short and widely spaced. Frond lamina 2-pinnate, to 2 m long; lowermost basal 1–2 (–3) pairs of pinnae to 10 cm long, completely skeletonised, forming 'aphlebiae' clustered around the crown; succeeding pinnae (with normal lamina) progressively increasing to c. 60 cm long; largest pinnules c. 12.5 cm long, c. 2 cm wide, adnate to the pinna rachis; margins sinuous to irregularly crenate-serrate; apices narrowly acuminate and serrate; bases of lower pinnules on large pinnae dilated to auriculate; veins grouped under each margin crenature; basal vein of each group often arising directly from the costa, and a free unbranched vein usually present between each group; basal scales on costae dark, narrow, with pale fragile margins and setiform apices, grading to shorter paler sometimes bullate scales. Sori on \pm middle of each vein, forming 1–3 irregular rows, exindusiate; paraphyses short, flat at base.

Distribution

Endemic to montane NE QLD between Windsor and Evelyn Tableland.

Habit and habitat

Terrestrial in montane rainforest.

Natural history

This uncommon tree-fern is readily identified by the 'wig' of aphlebiae near the bases of the stipes. Named after Queensland Government botanist F.M. Bailey who collected the type on Mt Bellenden Ker during the Archibald Meston expedition.

Similar species

Distinguished from all other Australian tree-ferns by the presence of a wig at the stipe bases.

Citation of Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes

Field AR, Quinn CJ, Zich FA (2022) Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/intro/index.htm (accessed online INSERT DATE).

Field AR, Quinn CJ, Zich FA (2022) '*Platyserium superbum*', in Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/entities/platyserium_superbum.htm (accessed online INSERT DATE).



Close up of frond showing sori.

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Close up of frond showing sori.

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Sori. © A.R. Field



Close up of frond showing upper (adaxial) side. © G. Sankowsky



Stipe and crozier. © CSIRO



Aphlebiae. © A.R. Field



Rhizome. © G. Sankowsky



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