

## *Alsophila exilis*

### Family:

Cyatheaceae

### Botanical name

*Alsophila exilis* (Holttum) Lehnert

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/51350865>

### Description

Rhizome erect to 4 m tall, 4–8 cm diam., suckering from rhizome buds, with 1 bud near each stipe base. Stipe c. 20 cm long; stipe towards base with 0.5–1.5 mm long blunt spines, each spine bearing a caducous dull brown scale; scales c. 10 mm long and 1 mm wide; base thickened; margins fragile, sometimes setiferous; apex setose. Lamina to 100 cm long, thin; longest pinnae to 30 cm long; basal pinnae to 18 cm long; pinna rachis smooth, a few very narrow scales basally; pinnules to 5.2 cm long, 1.5 cm wide, deeply lobed; lobes at an angle of c. 60°, crenate, acute; veins to 7 pairs, those on fertile pinnules mostly forked; scales near bases of pinnule costae ovate; larger scales brownish, apically setiferous; smaller scales pallid, not setiferous; distal scales and those on costules small, bullate, sometimes with filiform apices; upper surface of costae bearing rather sparse antrorsely curved slender brown hairs. Sori medial, near the forks of veins; exindusiate, with few very small scales around receptacle; paraphyses longer than sporangia, distally flexuous, thickened at their bases.

### Distribution

Endemic to Australia and known from only one locality on CYP.

### Habit and habitat

Terrestrial in spring-fed creeks in rainforest.

### Natural history

This is a rare and localised endemic tree-fern.

### Similar species

Similar to *Sphaeropteris felina*. It is also very similar to *Alsophila macgillivrayi* from Papua New Guinea and the Louisiade Archipelago. *Alsophila exilis* is distinguished by its shorter stipe (c. 20 cm long cf. to 1 m in *Sphaeropteris felina*) and distinctly reduced basal pinnae (cf. only slightly reduced in *Sphaeropteris felina*).

### Citation of Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes

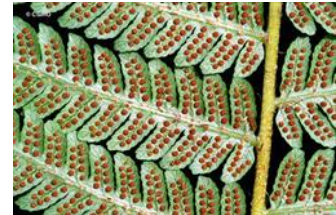
Field AR, Quinn CJ, Zich FA (2022) Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. [apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/intro/index.htm](https://apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/intro/index.htm) (accessed online INSERT DATE).

Field AR, Quinn CJ, Zich FA (2022) '*Platyserium superbum*', in Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. [apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/entities/platyserium\\_superbum.htm](https://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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Frond. © G. Sankowsky



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Stipe scales. © CSIRO

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