

# *Asplenium polyodon*

**Family:**

Aspleniaceae

**Botanical name**

*Asplenium polyodon* G.Forst.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/105813>

**Common name:**

Sickle Spleenwort

**Description**

Ferns with semi-erect or pendent fronds. Rhizome short-creeping, scaly. Stipe and rachis dark red-brown, glossy, brittle, sparsely scaly; stipe 9–65 cm long, 1–3 mm diam. Lamina narrowly elliptic, pinnate, 15–120 cm long, 5–26 cm wide, dark green and glossy above, pale green and dull below with prominent veins, sparsely scaly. Pinnae in 10–40 pairs, narrowly ovate to ovate, sometimes with an enlarged basal acroscopic lobe; bases unequally cuneate, shortly stalked; margins doubly serrate; apices acuminate; longest pinnae near middle, 3–17 cm long, 7–27 mm wide, gradually reducing upwards and abruptly contracted to an acuminate pinnatifid apical portion. Sori often slightly curved away from midrib, to 20 mm long. Perisores dark with smooth broad ridges and smooth lacunae; exospores 28.2–31.1 × 17.3–18.6 μm (means).

**Distribution**

Windsor Tableland NE QLD to southern NSW and Christmas, Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands. Also widespread in the Palaeotropics.

**Habit and habitat**

Epiphytic, often from other epiphytes, or lithophytic in high-rainfall rainforest or wet-sclerophyll forest. This species often grows in the rainforest canopy from the base of *Asplenium* or *Platyserium* ferns or from humus in large trunk forks.

**Natural history**

A polymorphic species with several named varieties and natural hybrids reported. It is a handsome ornamental fern that is commonly cultivated.

**Cultivation**

Best cultivated in a hanging container or in the base of a nest-fern in a cool moist tropical garden or fernery.

**Similar species**

Similar to *Asplenium parvum* but distinguished by *A. polyodon* being sparsely scaly on its stipe and rachis and by its longer pinnae.

**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 upper (adaxial) surface. © G.

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Habit. © CSIRO

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