

Azolla pinnata

Family:

Salviniaceae

Botanical name

Azolla pinnata R.Br.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/115380>

Description

Free-floating, aquatic ferns. Stem short, creeping, bearing short roots and sometimes trichomes. Leaves small, imbricate, fleshy; margins transparent, bilobed; upper lobe 1–2 mm long, usually minutely to strongly papillate, lacking veins, containing the cyanobacterium *Anabaena azollae* in central cavity; lower lobe submerged and bearing 2–4 megasporangia or microsporangia in axils. Megasporocarps oblong-conical, protected by a membrane-like indusium; megasporangia solitary; basal portion rounded, smooth, pitted or with raised, hexagonal markings surmounted by 3–9 floats. Microsporangia ovoid to globular, covered by a transparent indusium; microsporangia 7–100, spherical, stalked, containing 4–10 massulae bearing few to many, hooked or non-hooked, septate or non-septate processes. Microspores 32–64, in groups within massulae.

Plants triangular in outline, branching regularly, pinnate; roots feathery. Leaves oblong-triangular; apex rounded; margins slightly membranous; surface prominently tuberculate in basal half, dull reddish brown or green. Microsporangiate massulae ±conical, with 1–6 non-barbed processes aggregated at one end. Megasporocarps brown, partially obscured by leaf lobes. Megasporangia each with 9 apical, swimming floats.

Distribution

Widely scattered across Australia including man-made habitats. Also widespread outside Australia.

Habit and habitat

Free-floating aquatic fern occurring on still or slow moving water, particularly man-made dams and ponds.

Similar species

Plants irregularly branched, roots simple = *Azolla rubra*

Plants regularly branched, roots feathery = *Azolla pinnata*

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).



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