

# *Helminthostachys zeylanica*

## Family:

Ophioglossaceae

## Botanical name

*Helminthostachys zeylanica* (L.) Kaulf.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/103419>

## Description

Rhizome short-creeping, unbranched, subterranean. Fronds erect, 1 or 2 near apex of rhizome with a common basal stipe, 15–40 cm long. Sterile lamina tripartite; parts sessile or shortly stalked, divided into 3 or 5 pinnules. Pinnules lanceolate to elliptic, acute or rarely obtuse, 5–21 cm long, 6–40 mm wide; margins entire, crenate or serrate; veins free, dichotomously branched. Sporophore cylindrical, 4–13 cm long, 5–10 mm wide, on a 4–14 cm long stipe. Lateral branches each with a group of free sessile sporangia and sterile lobes at the apex.

## Distribution

Tropical coast and hinterland of WA, NT and QLD south to Whitsunday region QLD. Also in Asia, Malesia and the Pacific Islands.

## Habit and habitat

Terrestrial in open forest, swamp forest, beach scrubs and vine forest margins, in sandy soils in swales between sand-dunes, in black soils or on the edges of creeks or swampy areas.

## Natural history

The fronds of this species die back each year and regenerate from an underground rhizome the following wet season. They do not emerge every year.

## Cultivation

May be difficult to propagate and establish but grows well in a large deep container of free draining mix in a well lit part of a tropical garden or fernery.

## 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 sporophore. © CSIRO



Close up of sporophore. © G. Sankowsky



Frond. © CSIRO



Habit. © CSIRO

