

Microsorium punctatum

Family:

Polypodiaceae

Botanical name

Microsorium punctatum (L.) Copel.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/117035>

Description

Rhizome short- to long-creeping, not dorsiventrally flattened, sparsely scaly. Scales 1.5–4 mm long, 1–2.5 mm wide, ovate to broadly ovate, narrowed rather abruptly above rounded base; cells in central portion larger and thick-walled; marginal cells smaller and thin-walled; margins irregularly dentate; apex acute. Fronds scattered, c. 1 cm or more apart. Stipe indistinct; basal 0.5–3 cm unwinged. Lamina simple, narrowly elliptic, (14–) 27–113 (–150) cm long, 2.7–11 cm wide, pale green or yellow-green, coriaceous, glabrous, tapering to an acute or sometimes obtuse or rounded apex, narrowing gradually to base; margins entire or slightly undulate; midrib prominent, pale green or yellow-green; main lateral veins usually obvious, at least in dried fronds, angled at 60°–65° to rachis; remaining veins obscure. Sori numerous, 0.5–1.5 mm diam., scattered over lower surface of distal half of frond, not or only very slightly impressed into lamina. Spores 37.5–70 µm long, 22.5–40 µm wide.

Distribution

Occurs along the E coast of QLD from Torres Strait to Stradbroke Island. Also known from tropical west Africa, Asia and Pacific Islands.

Habit and habitat

Epiphytic, lithophytic or terrestrial in a wide variety of seasonally dry vine forests. Common in beach scrubs and in boulder-pile vegetation where it forms expansive stands.

Natural history

A very drought tolerant CAM fern.

Cultivation

Easily cultivated in the ground or in a container in a tropical or subtropical garden or fernery. This species may be invasive in some situations.

Similar species

Similar to *Microsorium australiense*

1a. Plants epiphytic, rhizome short-creeping, dorsiventrally flattened, lamina thin, bright green, <4 cm wide, lateral veins 45–50 degrees to midrib, spores 100 x 67 µm = *Microsorium australiense*

1b. Plants lithophytic or terrestrial, rhizome medium to long creeping, not dorsi-ventrally flattened, lamina leathery, <11 cm wide, yellow-green lateral veins 60–65 degrees to midrib, spores 70 x 40 µm = *Microsorium punctatum*

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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Habit. © CSIRO



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