

Microsorium scolopendria

Family:

Polypodiaceae

Botanical name

Microsorium scolopendria (Burm.f.) Copel.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/73517>

Description

Rhizome long-creeping, c. 5 mm diam., dark green, scaly when young. Scales scattered, narrowly ovate, 1.5–5 mm long, 0.6–2 mm wide, squarrose, deciduous, thin, dull, brown to dark brown; margins sparsely dentate; apex long-acuminate. Fronds 15–60 (–85) cm long, 2–6 cm apart, or occasionally clustered on short brachyblasts. Stipe 5–28 (–40) cm long, pale, glossy, glabrous except for a few scales at base. Lamina deeply pinnatifid with 1–4 (–5) pairs of lobes and a similar terminal one, rarely simple, pale green, thinly coriaceous, glabrous except for a few scattered scales on midrib and costae. Lateral lobes ± linear, 4–18 (–22) cm long, 1–3.5 cm wide, tapering to an acute or obtuse apex and usually narrowing a little towards base; margins entire or undulate. Terminal segment often elongate. Costae prominent; other veins immersed. Sori to 4 mm diam., rounded or somewhat elliptic, in 1 (–2) irregular rows on either side of costae, with some sori also in the wings between lobes, impressed a little into lamina, forming truncate protuberances on the upper surface; hair-like paraphyses present in immature sori. Spores 45–60 µm long, 27.5–40 µm wide.

Distribution

Known only from Cape York Peninsula in QLD. Also in Asia, Malesia and the Pacific Islands

Habit and habitat

Terrestrial or epiphytic climbing on small trees on hummocks in swamp forest.

Cultivation

Readily cultivated in a container in a tropical or subtropical garden or fernery. This species usually scrambles out of the container it is planted in.

Similar species

Similar to *Microsorium grossum* from which it may be distinguished by its more slender rhizome, epiphytic habit and smaller darker rhizome scales (cf. terrestrial habit and larger paler rhizome scales in *M. grossum*).

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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Frond, showing upper (adaxial) surface. © G. Sankowsky

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