## Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes - Online edition

# Pellaea falcata

Family:

Pteridaceae

Botanical name

Pellaea falcata (R.Br.) Fee

Link to Australian Plant Name Index for publication details and synonyms: https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/115236

Common name: Sickle Fern

#### Description

Rhizome long-creeping; scales narrowly ovate, c. 1.5–2 mm long, basally attached, with a midrib of black occluded cells; margins entire, of paler brown open cells; apex attenuate and acute. Fronds 37–105 cm long. Stipe 10–25 cm long (20–30% length of frond), c. 5–10 mm apart, dark brown, ±cylindrical; stipe and rachis clothed with scales and uniseriate hairs; scales narrowly triangular, 3–4 mm long, spreading, persistent, mid- to dark brown. Lamina 1-pinnate, narrowly ovate, 18–67 cm long, with 27–65 (–95) sessile or shortly-stalked pinnae (stalk less than 2 mm long). Pinnae oblong to linear-oblong, 22–56 mm long, 5–12 mm wide, dark green above, pale green beneath, coriaceous, ±glabrous; base truncate to cordate; margins entire, sometimes minutely crenate or toothed towards apex; apex obtuse or acute; veins free, forked, obscure. Sporangia in a continuous, marginal band c. 1 mm wide, absent from base and sometimes from apex; indusium marginal, membranous, obscured by sporangia at maturity. Spores trilete, ±globose, coarsely echinate.

#### Distribution

Temperate and subtropical Australia, Polynesia and New Zealand. Reports of this taxon in tropical Queensland probably refer to large forms of *Pellaea nana*.

#### Habit and habitat

Terrestrial or lithophytic in temperate or subtropical rainforest or tall wet sclerophyll forest.

#### Cultivation

Easily cultivated in a small container or among rocks in the garden.

#### Similar species

Pellaea nana, Pellaea paradoxa and Pellaea calidirupium

1a. rachis scales and hairs mid- to dark-brown, spreading = 2

1b. rachis scales and whitish to pale-brown appressed = 3

2a. rachis scales mostly 3–4 mm long, pinnae 22–56 mm long = Pellaea falcata

2b. rachis scales mostly 1–2.5 mm long, pinnae 5–25 mm long = Pellaea nana

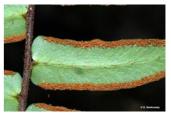
3a. pinnae 20–60 mm long; all lateral pinnae the same length = Pellaea paradoxa

3b. pinnae 14–30 mm long; lateral pinnae reducing in length and width towards the frond apex = Pellaea calidirupium

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Close up of frond showing sori. © G. Sankowsky



Close up of frond showing sori. © G. Sankowsky



Frond. © G. Sankowsky



Habit. © G. Sankowsky

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