

Pellaea nana

Family:

Pteridaceae

Botanical name

Pellaea nana (Hook.) Bostock

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/137195>

Common name:

Dwarf Sickle Fern

Description

Rhizome short- to medium-creeping; scales narrowly ovate, c. 1.5 mm long, basally attached, with a midrib of black occluded cells; margins entire, of paler brown open cells; apex attenuate and acute. Fronds (10–) 20–50 cm long. Stipes 5–20 cm long (20–50% length of frond), c. 2–5 mm apart, dark brown, \pm cylindrical; stipe and rachis clothed with scales and uniseriate hairs; scales narrowly triangular, 1–2.5 mm long, spreading, persistent, brown. Lamina 1-pinnate, with 25–65 crowded sessile or shortly stalked pinnae (stalk less than 1 mm long). Pinnae oblong to linear-oblong, c. 5–25 mm long, 2.5–7 mm wide, dark green above, paler green beneath, stiffly herbaceous, \pm glabrous; base truncate to cordate; margins entire, sometimes minutely crenate or toothed towards the apex; apex obtuse or acute; veins free and 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, \pm globose, coarsely echinate.

Distribution

Endemic to eastern Australia ranging from the Windsor Tableland in NEQ to the Blue Mountains in NSW. Most commonly recorded in SE Queensland.

Habit and habitat

Plants terrestrial or lithophytic in montane tropical rainforest, subtropical rainforest and temperate rainforest. In NE Queensland *Pellaea nana* is usually found growing on rocks and boulders in or near watercourses in simple notophyll vine forest.

Natural history

An attractive horticultural fern. Populations from tropical QLD tend to have crowded large rectangular pinnae. Some population in SE QLD have red new growth.

Cultivation

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

Similar species

Pellaea calidirupium, *Pellaea falcata* and *Pellaea paradoxa*.

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*

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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Close up of frond showing sori.

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Close up of frond showing sori.

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Close up of frond showing upper (adaxial) surface. © G.

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Rhizome. © G. Sankowsky



Habit. © CSIRO



Habit. © CSIRO



Habit. © A.R. Field



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