

Sphaeropteris cooperi

Family:

Cyatheaceae

Botanical name

Sphaeropteris cooperi (Hook. ex F.Muell.) R.M.Tryon

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/85372>

Description

Rhizome erect to 12 m tall, to 15 cm diam.; lower trunk often much thickened by adventitious roots. Stipe to c. 50 cm long; basal scales to 50 mm long, c. 5 mm wide, thin, whitish or pale brown, with short close-set dark orange-brown setae; smaller scales often with a broad orange-brown margin. Frond lamina to 3.5 m long; longest pinnae to 65 cm long; pinna rachis sparsely verrucose, with many small scales which mostly have brown marginal setae; pinnules to 12 cm long, to 2.5 cm wide, lobed almost to costa, with a few basal lobes adnate; lobes crenate-serrate, sometimes glaucous on lower surface; scales near base of costae narrow, brown, with marginal setae, grading to shorter whitish scales with rather long, brown or whitish marginal setae; a few thick hairs on both surfaces of costae near apices of pinnules. Sori exindusiate, with narrow scales usually with setiferous margins around receptacle base.

Distribution

Endemic to eastern Australia between Cooktown NE QLD and Coffs Harbour NSW. Also naturalised in several areas overseas.

Habit and habitat

Terrestrial on rainforest margins in open places. It is often a coloniser of disturbed sites, especially roadsides. It is less common in closed canopy rainforest.

Natural history

This species is widely grown as an ornamental plant. It has naturalised and become an invasive weed on a number of tropical islands including Hawaii.

Cultivation

Readily grown in a tub when small or in the ground in a well lit part of a moist garden when large.

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) '*Platycterium superbum*', in Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/entities/platycterium_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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Stipe scales. © G. Sankowsky



Rhizome. © G. Sankowsky



Habit. © G. Sankowsky



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