

# *Sphaeropteris felina*

## Family:

Cyatheaceae

## Botanical name

*Sphaeropteris felina* (Roxb.) Pic.Serm.

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/119202>

## Description

Rhizome erect to 8 m tall, to c. 20 cm diam. Stipe to 1 m long; basal scales similar in structure to those of *C. cooperi* but usually paler. Lamina c. 3 m long; largest pinnae to 75 cm long; basal pinnae only slightly reduced; pinnules to 12 cm long, to c. 2.5 cm wide, lobed almost to costae, with 1 or 2 basal lobes often free; lobes strongly crenate; veins to 15 pairs; costal scales pale, small, with short marginal hairs; costular scales whitish, bullate; upper surface of costules and veins with scattered thick whitish hairs; similar hairs on margins of pinnule lobes. Sori near costules, exindusiate, with narrow ciliate scales around receptacle base; paraphyses slender, slightly longer than sporangia.

## Distribution

Occurs in Cape York Peninsula QLD between Lockerbie Scrub and the Mcllwraith Range. Also in Papua New Guinea.

## Habit and habitat

Terrestrial in rainforest, especially feather-palm and fan-palm swamp forest at low altitudes.

## Natural history

This is a rare and localised tree-fern.

## Similar species

*Alsophila exilis* is distinguished by its shorter stipe (c. 20 cm long cf. to 1 m in *Sphaeropteris felina*) and distinctly reduced basal pinnae ( cf. only slightly reduced in *Sphaeropteris felina*).

## 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](https://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](https://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 upper (adaxial) surface of frond. © G. Sankowsky



Stipe scales and crozier. ©

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