

Sphaerostephanos unitus

Family:

Thelypteridaceae

Botanical name

Sphaerostephanos unitus (L.) Holttum

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/116385>

Description

Rhizome long-creeping, c. 5 mm diam. Fronds to c. 100 cm long. Stipe 30–60 cm long (to lowermost unreduced pinnae), glossy dark brown. Lamina ovate, 20–60 cm long, ± coriaceous, dark green (sometimes yellowed by exposure) and glossy above, dull and paler green beneath; lowermost reduced pinnae 6–12 pairs, 3–10 mm long, 1–5 mm wide; normal pinnae to 30 pairs; largest pinnae 10–15 cm long, 0.8–1.5 cm wide, lobed one-third of distance to costae; lobes rounded, with a slight apiculum; margins entire, downturned; lowermost normal pinnae not or a little narrowed at bases; veins 8–10 pairs, prominently raised on abaxial surface, slightly depressed adaxially, 11/2 pairs anastomosing, next 2–4 pairs passing to sides of the sinus membrane; hairs on lower surface of costae and costules slender, 0.5 mm long, antrorse but not appressed; glands on and between veins sessile, spherical, transparent, orange to brownish; upper surface hairy on costae only. Sori supramedial; indusium firm, glabrous or bearing a few superficial sessile spherical glands or acicular hairs; sporangium bearing a subsessile spherical gland near the annulus and a glandular hair on the stalk.

Distribution

Occurs in the NT (near Darwin), in NE QLD (near Atherton) and further south in QLD. Uncommonly collected in Australia but possibly overlooked. Also widespread in the Palaeotropics.

Habit and habitat

Terrestrial in open woodland on the margins of wetlands.

Natural history

Uncommonly recorded for QLD.

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 upper (adaxial) surface. © G. Sankowsky

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Frond. © G. Sankowsky

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