

Drynaria sparsisora

Family:

Polypodiaceae

Botanical name

Drynaria sparsisora (Desv.) T.Moore

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

<https://id.biodiversity.org.au/name/apni/101311>

Description

Rhizome 2–5 cm thick, scaly when young, smooth and snake-like when old, with scattered appressed scale bases. Scales 3–6 mm long, 1.5–2 mm wide, stiff, brown to very dark brown; bases rounded, ±appressed, overlapping, abruptly tapering to a narrow acute apex; margins paler and bearing very fine cilia. Nest fronds ±ovate, 11–36 cm long, 8–17 cm wide, shallowly or deeply lobed; lobe apices rounded. Fertile fronds to 100 cm long; stipe to 4.5 cm long, obscurely winged almost to the base. Lamina broadly ovate, pinnatifid, to 95 cm long, coriaceous. Lobes strap-like, decurrent above and below, continuous with a flange 0.5–1 mm of midrib, 7–33 cm long, 0.9–6 cm wide, narrowed slightly towards their base, tapering to a mostly acute apex; margins entire; costular nectary in acroscopic pinna axil or absent. Sori round, 1 (–2) mm diam., irregularly placed between major lateral veins of the foliage leaves, not impressed into the lamina surface. Spores 32.5–62.5 µm long, 27.5–42.5 µm wide.

Distribution

Temple Bay NE QLD to Hervey Bay SE QLD. Also in Malesia.

Habit and habitat

Epiphytic, lithophytic or terrestrial in vine forest, commonly in beach scrubs and seasonal riparian vine forests.

Natural history

A large mass-forming basket-fern with specialised nest-fronds for catching falling debris. This species sometimes forms a small clump but usually spreads along the ground or climbs up the trunks of trees.

Cultivation

Readily cultivated in a hanging container, on a tree or in a rockery in a tropical garden. This species tends to become too large for a fernery.

Similar species

Drynaria rigidula and *Drynaria quercifolia*.

1a. Pinnae borne on a short stalk, pinna margins shallowly incised between each pair of lateral veins = *Drynaria rigidula*

1b. Pinnae decurrent, pinna margins entire = 2

2a. Sori in 2 regular rows between lateral veins; rhizome scales soft, spreading and persistent = *Drynaria quercifolia*

2b. Sori scattered between lateral veins; rhizome scales stiff, appressed, not persistent = *Drynaria sparsisora*

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) '*Platycerium superbum*', in Australian Tropical Ferns and Lycophytes. apps.lucidcentral.org/fern/text/entities/platycerium_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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Nest frond. © G. Sankowsky



Habit. © CSIRO



Nest frond. © CSIRO



Rhizome. © G. Sankowsky



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