



## *Pteris macilenta*

### Common Name(s):

Sweet fern

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

### Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: North, South and Chatham Islands. Widespread in the North Island (except for the central volcanic plateau and adjacent main axial ranges), common in the northern part of the South Island reaching a western southern limit near Greymouth and in the east on Banks Peninsula where it may have been planted (Wilson 2009).

### Habitat:

Coastal to montane (in northern areas). Usually in dry, less heavily vegetated sites in forest but also on cliff faces and banks in light scrub. Especially common overlying calcareous or other base-rich rocks.

### Features\*:

Terrestrial ferns. Rhizomes short, erect, scaly. Stipes 0.1-0.5 m long, yellow-brown, base scaly. Laminae 0.25-0.9 × 0.15-0.5 m, light green, 3-pinnate, ovate, thin,; veins reticulated along midribs but free elsewhere, Pinnae widely spaced; most lower secondary pinnae stalked or sessile. Ultimate segments 5-15 × 3-5 mm, oblong, apices deeply toothed, margins almost smooth. Sori continuous along pinna margins on a marginal vein, protected by a membranous inrolled pinna margins.

### Flowering:

Not applicable - spore producing

### Fruiting:

Not applicable - spore producing

### Threats:

Not Threatened

### \*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (17 January 2012). Description adapted from Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

### References and further reading:

Allan, H.H. 1961: New Zealand Flora. Vol. I. Wellington, Government Printer.

Brownsey, P.J.; Smith-Dodsworth, J.C. 2000: New Zealand Ferns and Allied Plants. Auckland, David Bateman.

Wilson, H. 2009: Natural History of Banks Peninsula. Christchurch, Canterbury University Press.

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=1205](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1205)



**Caption:** Lake Waikato, near Waverley, Taranaki. Mar 2013  
**Photographer:** Robyn Ogle



**Caption:** Sori on abaxial margins of pinnae. Lake Waikato, near Waverley, Taranaki. Mar 2013  
**Photographer:** Robyn Ogle