



Polystichum vestitum

Common Name(s):

punui, prickly shield fern

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Snares, Antipodes, Campbell, Auckland, Macquarie Islands. In the North Island scarce north of Auckland and the Coromandel Peninsula.

Habitat:

Coastal to alpine. In the northern part of its range *P. vestitum* is confined to montane regions or cold ('temperature inversion') situations, further south it progressively extends to lower altitudes; in the South Island it ranges from coastal to alpine regions. *Polystichum vestitum* is a species of exposed habitats, such as forest margins, gully floors and tussock grasslands, but it also commonly extends into forest in colder, wetter parts of New Zealand.

Features*:

Rhizome erect, sometimes forming a trunk up to 0.9 m tall. Stipe 90–410 mm long. Stipe and rachis densely clothed with scales of diverse form. Larger rachis scales usually ovate-lanceolate (those from the mid rachis 340–1620 mm at their mid length) to lanceolate-acicular (Chatham Islands and these from the mid rachis 180–780 mm at their mid length); usually bicolorous, with an obvious dark brown centre surrounded on all sides by pale brown margins, but dark centre sometimes much reduced (Chatham Islands, Subantarctic Islands and islands around Stewart Island especially) such that the rachis scales are uniformly pale brown; apex usually long and tapering; usually without marginal projections except for plants from the Chatham Islands, in which they may be very well developed; usually underlain by pale bristle-like scales. Lamina 0.23–2.0 m, long, 90–350(–480) mm; narrowly elliptic to narrowly oblong; bipinnate; adaxially usually dark green (sometimes purple-green), abaxially paler. Primary pinnae in 20–62 pairs, oblong. Secondary pinnae all stalked except those towards the apex of primary pinnae; with sharply pointed apex and prominent marginal teeth and/or crenulations. Sori round. Indusia peltate, ± flat, ± round; with entire although sometimes undulate and/or scalloped margins; central dark area usually insignificant (< 10% surface area, and usually < 5%).

Flowering:

Not Applicable - Spore Producing

Fruiting:

Not Applicable - Spore Producing

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (13 November 2012). Description adapted from Perrie et al. (2003).

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Rolfe, J.R. 2011: Checklist of vascular plants recorded from the Chatham Island Islands. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 57pp.

Perrie, L.R.; Brownsey, P.J.; Lockhart, P.J.; Large, M.F. 2003B: Morphological and genetic diversity in the New Zealand fern *Polystichum vestitum* (Dryopteridaceae), with special reference to the Chatham Islands. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 41: 581-602.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2223



Caption: *Polystichum vestitum*

Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt.

Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe