



Pteridium esculentum

Common Name(s):

bracken, rarauhe, bracken fern

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Indigenous: New Zealand: Kermadec (Raoul Island only), North, South, Stewart, Chatham and Antipodes Islands. Also South East Asia, Australia, Lord Howe, Norfolk Islands extending into western Oceania.

Habitat:

Common in mainly seral habitats from the coast to the low alpine zone.

Features*:

Fern with deeply rooted, subterranean rhizomes. Stipes and rachis chestnut brown at base, yellow-brown to russet at apex, woody, grooved, smooth, bearing sparse non-glandular hairs or ± glabrous stipe 0.2-1.3(-2.0) m or more long, 3-8(-15) mm diameter, woody. Lamina broadly elliptic or broadly ovate, 0.25-1.5-1.8 × 0.2-1.0-1.4 m wide, 3-4-pinnate at base, dark green (often glaucescent) above, paler beneath, adaxially glabrous, abaxially with sparse red-brown hairs on midribs and dense colourless appressed non-glandular hairs along veins. Longest pinnae arising at narrow angles; longest 150-650 × 80-400 mm. Secondary pinnae arising at narrow angles; longest 50-260 × 15-130 mm; basal one often much-reduced; midribs of primary and secondary pinnae narrowly winged. Tertiary pinnae decreasing markedly in length along secondary pinnae; longest 7-70 × 2-20 mm, with winged midribs. Quaternary pinnae to 12 × 4 mm; ultimate pinnules linear, straight, acute, entire, adnate and decurrent on 1 side. Sori continuous along pinna margin. Indusium > 0.2 mm wide, membranous, entire, glabrous. Spores dark yellow to orange yellow., granulose.

Flowering:

None (spore bearing)

Fruiting:

None (spore bearing)

Threats:

Not Threatened.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 11 January 2011. Description adapted from Brownsey (1998) and Brownsey & Smith-Dodsworth (2000).

References and further reading:

Brownsey, P.J. 1998: Dennstaedtiaceae: Flora of Australia 48: 214-228.

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

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2230



Caption: Awhitu Regional Park, Auckland region

Photographer: John Sawyer



Caption: Mt Karioi, south of Raglan

Photographer: John Sawyer