Tmesipteris sigmatifolia

Common Name(s):

Fossil Fern. Fork Fern

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Indigenous. North and South Islands. In the North Island recorded from Te Paki south to about Thames in the east and near Wanganui in the west. In the South Island recorded from Nelson, north-west Nelson and Westland. Present also in New Caledonia.

Habitat:

Coastal and lowland forest. Usually epiphytic on tree fern trunks but also found growing terrestrially in deep leaf litter. In the northern part of its range it grows mostly within kauri (Agathis australis (D.Don.) Lindl.) forest.

Features*:

Plants usually epiphytic sometimes terrestrial. Rhizomes farcreeping, buried within host bark or tissue, or buried within leaf litter, branched, lacking roots. Aerial stems pendulous, 60-280 mm long, undivided. Lamina spirally arranged, 10-20 mm long, bright green to dark green, distinctly sigmoid or narrow-oblong, coriaceous, apices blunt, midrib distinct, prolonged beyond lamina as a fine mucro. Sporangia (synangia) yellow-green, confined to the base of the upper side of the lamina, somewhat inconspicuous, unequal, testiculate with rounded apices, usually confined to upper portion of stem.

Flowering:

Not applicable - spore producing

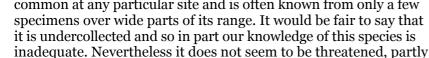
Fruiting:

Not applicable - spore producing

Threats:

A naturally uncommon and biologically sparse species. It is never common at any particular site and is often known from only a few

because it requires mature forest, much of which is already protected over large parts of its known range.





Caption: Old sporangia. Kauri Glen, Auckland.

Photographer: © John Braggins



Caption: On Cyathea dealbata, Riverhead. May 2008.

Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (June 2009). Description adpated from Chinnock (1975).

References and further reading:

Chinnock, R.J. 1975: The New Zealand species of Tmesipteris (Psilotaceae). New Zealand Journal of Botany 13: 743-768

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=329