



## *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 Pahi 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 far-creeping, 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 specimens over wide parts of its range. It would be fair to say that it is undercollected and so in part our knowledge of this species is inadequate. Nevertheless it does not seem to be threatened, partly because it requires mature forest, much of which is already protected over large parts of its known range.

### \*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (June 2009). Description adapted 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](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=329)



**Caption:** Old sporangia. Kauri Glen, Auckland.

**Photographer:** © John Braggins



**Caption:** On *Cyathea dealbata*, Riverhead. May 2008.

**Photographer:** Jeremy Rolfe