



Maine Department of Conservation
Natural Areas Program

Asplenium trichomanes-ramosum L.

Green Spleenwort

- Habitat:** Crevices and talus of calcareous rock.
[Conifer forest (forest, upland)]
- Range:** Circumboreal, southern Greenland, Eurasia. In North America, Newfoundland to Alaska south to Cape Breton, Maine, Vermont, New York, Ontario, Wisconsin, Colorado, and California.
- Phenology:** Fruits June - September. Nearly evergreen, the frond persisting long before withering.
- Family:** Polypodiaceae

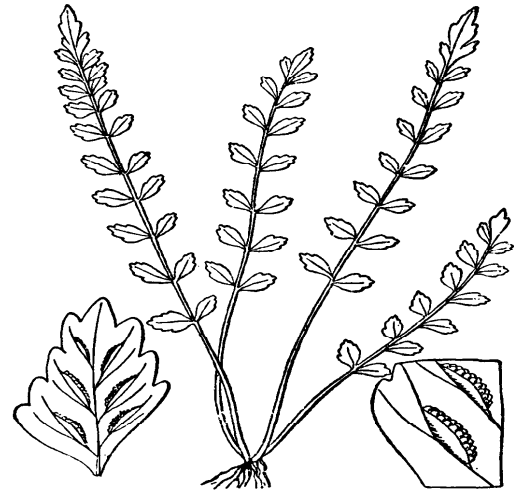


Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed.

Aids to Identification: Green spleenwort is a small, delicate fern with linear fronds, 2-15 cm long, 1-2 cm wide. It is once pinnate, the pinnae about twice as long as wide and irregularly toothed. In general, it is smaller, greener, and more fragile than the more common maidenhair spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*). It can be distinguished from other *Asplenium* species by its green rachis with dark base, and stipe about 1/3 the length of the narrow, once-pinnate frond.

Ecological characteristics: The ecology of this species, other than its apparent preference for calcareous rocks in cool, moist areas, is largely unknown. Though it is rare throughout its range, occurring often in widely separated locations, it may be very locally abundant. It appears vigorous and thriving at its one known Maine site; here it is growing on a serpentine outcrop where a small amount of calcium is leaching out of associated rocks and precipitating on some cliff surfaces.

Synonyms: Sometimes referred to by its former name, *Asplenium viride*.

Rarity of *Asplenium trichomanes-ramosum*

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| State Rank: | S1 | Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity or vulnerability to extirpation. |
| New England Rank: | Division 2 | Regionally rare plant., fewer than 20 current (seen since 1970) occurrences in New England. |
| Global Rank: | G4 | Widespread, abundant, and apparently secure globally, but with cause for long-term concern. |

Status of *Asplenium trichomanes-ramosum*

| | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Federal Status: | None | No Federal Status. |
| State Status: | Endangered | |

Known Distribution in Maine:

- ▲ Historical (before 1982)
● Recent (1982 - present)

This rare plant has been documented from a total of 2 town(s) in the following county(ies): Somerset.

Dates of documented observations are: 1917, 1977, 1998, 2000

Reason(s) for rarity:

Southern limit of range, restricted habitat.

Conservation considerations:

Without detailed information on this species' response to openings, the prudent course would be to avoid harvesting in the immediate vicinity of its ledge habitat.

The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 11 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species, please contact the Natural Areas Program
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

