

TOOTHED SPLEENWORT

Asplenium dentatum L.

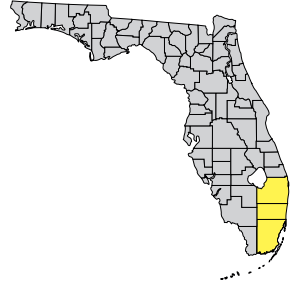
Synonym: *Asplenium trichomanes-dentatum* L.

Family: Aspleniaceae (spleenwort)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S1S2

Legal Status: US—none FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—UPL FL—UPL



Gil Nelson

Field Description (photo and drawing, left): Small, tufted **fern**, often in colonies, with two types of fronds: **fertile fronds** erect, 3.5 - 10 inches long, with widely spaced leaflets; **sterile fronds** spreading or prostrate, shorter with small crowded leaflets. **Leaflets** about 0.5 inches long and wide, in 5 - 12 pairs, with rounded teeth on outer margins. **Leaf stalk** flattened, pale green, to 4 inches long. **Sori** linear, 2 - 5 per leaflet.

Similar and Related Rare Species (drawing, right): Biscayne spleenwort (*Asplenium x biscaynianum*) is a hybrid of toothed spleenwort and modest spleenwort (*Asplenium verecundum*); it is probably extinct. It has leaf stalks 2 - 5 inches long, 1 - 2 sori per lobe, and deeply cut, widely spaced leaflets. Other rare FL spleenworts in this guide: single sorus spleenwort (*Asplenium monanthes*), American bird's nest fern (*Asplenium serratum*), and modest spleenwort (*Asplenium verecundum*).

Toothed spleenwort

Asplenium dentatum

Habitat: Both toothed spleenwort and Biscayne spleenwort occur in tropical hardwood hammocks and on limestone outcrops and walls of limesinks.

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Toothed spleenwort: FL, Mexico, Antilles, Central America, Columbia, Venezuela. Biscayne spleenwort was known only from Dade County, FL.

Conservation Status: Toothed spleenwort is known from 11 preserves. Biscayne spleenwort is probably extinct in the wild.

Protection & Management: Protect all remaining rockland hammocks from disturbance, fire, and hydrologic alterations. Enforce plant protection laws and prosecute plant poachers. Eradicate exotic plant species from preserves.

References: Coile 2000, FNA 1993, IRC 1999, Lellinger and Evans 1985, Nelson 2000, Ward 1979, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000b.

