

SINGLE-SORUS SPLEENWORT

Asplenium monanthes L.

Synonyms: *Asplenium monanthemum* Murray

Family: Aspleniaceae (spleenwort)

FNAI Ranks: G4/S1

Legal Status: US-none; FL-none



Asplenium monanthes

Gil Nelson



Asplenium x heteroresiliens

Field Description: Fern with delicate, clustered fronds. **Leaf stalk** shiny and reddish-brown. **Leaf blades** 5 - 40 cm long with 10 - 40 pairs of opposite or sub-opposite, scalloped **leaflets**. Leaflets with 1 - 3 **sori** along the lower edge; sori contain sporangia and each are partially covered with a flap of whitish tissue (**indusium**).

Similar Species: Ebony spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*) is common in disturbed woodlands; it has alternate leaflets with small lobes ("ears") at the base of each leaflet, and numerous sori per leaflet.

Related Rare Species: Morzenti's spleenwort (*Asplenium x heteroresiliens*) is a hybrid of *Asplenium heterochroum* and *Asplenium resiliens*; it has somewhat leathery, toothed, opposite leaflets on a black stem with many linear sori. Several other spleenworts are rare in FL. See in this guide: American toothed spleenwort (*Asplenium dentatum*), American bird's nest fern (*Asplenium serratum*), and modest spleenwort (*Asplenium verecundum*).

Habitat: Hammocks; on limestone around sinkholes, outcrops and cave openings.

Best Survey Season: Summer-fall.

Range-wide Distribution: Single sorus spleenwort: FL, widely scattered across SE US, AZ, Hawaii, West Indies, Central and South America, and Africa. Morzenti's spleenwort: FL, NC, SC.

Conservation Status: Only one population of single-sorus spleenwort is extant in FL, in a state park in Jackson County; an occurrence once known in Alachua County has been destroyed. Morzenti's spleenwort is known from 7 counties and 2 preserves in north FL.

Protection and Management: Protect deciduous hardwood forests from logging and development. Monitor impact of public use on park populations. Avoid disturbing cave openings and limestone outcrops. Enforce plant protection laws and prosecute plant poachers.

References: Coile 2000, FNA 1993, Lellinger and Evans 1985, Nelson 2000, Patrick et al. 1995, Wagner 1966, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000b.

