

## DWARF SPLEENWORT

*Asplenium pumilum* Sw.

**Synonyms:** none

**Family:** Aspleniaceae (spleenwort)

**FNAI Ranks:** G5/S1

**Legal Status:** US-none FL-Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US-FAC\*+ FL-FAC



No Image  
Available

**Field Description:** Epipetric, diminutive, delicate fern that grows on limestone. Dwarf spleenwort can grow up to 20 cm tall. Leaves once-pinnate, blades triangular in outline with 3-7 segments up to 12 cm long and 8 cm wide. Petiole to 13 cm long, green on younger plants and green to purple/black on older plants (FNA 1993, Nelson 2000, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000).

**Similar Species:** Dwarf spleenwort can be distinguished from the 15 other species of *Asplenium*s that occur in Florida based on the following combination of characters: leaves once-pinnate, blades triangular in shape with 3-7 segments that are also triangular in appearance (Nelson 2000)

**Related Rare Species:** Dwarf spleenwort (*Asplenium pumilum*) is easily recognized by its hairy blades and deltate leaves. Several other spleenworts are rare in FL. See in this guide: American toothed spleenwort (*Asplenium dentatum*), American

## dwarf spleenwort

*Asplenium pumilum*

bird's nest fern (*Asplenium serratum*), and modest spleenwort (*Asplenium verecundum*).

**Habitat:** On limestone outcrops in mesic hammocks and successional hardwood forests.

**Best Survey Season:** Identifiable all year

**Range-wide Distribution:** Known to occur in a few peninsular Florida counties from Alachua County southwest to Citrus County and southeast to Volusia County. Also known from the West Indies, Mexico, Central America, and South America

**Conservation Status:** Listed state-endangered, 6 populations are known to occur in 5 counties in central Florida. Of these 2 are believed to be extant, and only 1 is on conservation land.

**Protection and Management:** Hand pull exotic species posing threat to dwarf spleenwort: Chinese brake fern (*Pteris vittata*), cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*), Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*), and sword fern (*Nephrolepis cordifolia*). Avoid all disturbances to substrate. Maintain hydrological quantity and quality

**References:** (FNA) Flora of North America Editorial Committee. 1993. Flora of North America north of Mexico, Vol. 2: pteridophytes and gymnosperms. Oxford University Press, New York. Nelson, G. 2000. The Ferns of Florida, a reference and field guide. Pineapple Press, Inc. Sarasota, FL. Wunderlin, R.P., and B.F. Hansen. 2000. Flora of Florida. Volume I. Pteridophytes and Gymnosperms. University Press of Florida, Gainesville.