

MODEST SPLEENWORT

Asplenium verecundum Chapm. ex Underw.

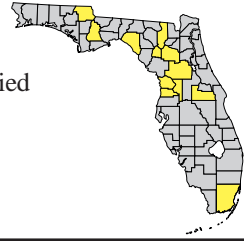
Synonym: *A. myriophyllum* (Swartz.) C. Presl. misapplied

Family: Aspleniaceae (spleenwort)

FNAI Ranks: G3/S1

Legal Status: US—none FL—Endangered

Wetland Status: US—UPL FL—UPL



Asplenium x curtissii

Gil Nelson



Asplenium x plenum



Asplenium verecundum

Field Description (photo, lower right and drawing, left and top): Fern with tufted, lacy, evergreen fronds, usually drooping or arching, to 16 inches long, with a short, brownish-black leaf stalk. Leaflets alternate, in 8 - 22 well spaced pairs, leaflets divided into 2 - 5 segments, each with one sorus covered by an indusium.

Similar and Related Rare Species: Eared spleenwort (*Asplenium auritum*, drawing, lower right), state-endangered, has sharply toothed leaflets with an “ear” at the base of most leaflets and up to 10 pairs of sori per leaflet. Modest spleenwort hybridizes with a common species, cutleaf spleenwort (*Asplenium abscissum*), to produce a rare hybrid, Curtiss’ spleenwort (photo, above left, *Asplenium x curtissii*). Cutleaf spleenwort backcrosses with Curtiss’ spleenwort to produce another rare hybrid, ruffled spleenwort (see photo, above right, *Asplenium x plenum*). Also see toothed spleenwort (*A. dentatum*) and single-sorus spleenwort (*A. monanthes*) in this guide.

Modest spleenwort

Asplenium verecundum

Habitat: Modest spleenwort: rockland hammocks, limestone outcrops, grottoes, and sinkholes. Eared spleenwort: trunks of trees in wet hammocks and cypress strand swamps.

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Modest spleenwort: endemic to FL. Eared spleenwort: FL, Mexico, West Indies, Central and South America.

Conservation Status: Most populations are on private lands where clearing, logging, and draining have destroyed the hammocks, swamps, and outcrops.

Protection & Management: Preserve swamp and hammock forests; protect and restore natural hydrology. Eradicate exotic pest plants. Enforce plant protection laws and prosecute plant poachers.

References: Coile 2000, FNA 1993, IRC 1999, Lellinger and Evans 1985, Nauman 1986, Nelson 2000, Ward 1979, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000b.

