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

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.