

TOOTHED MAIDEN FERN

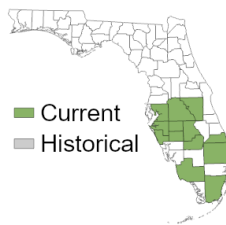
Meniscium serratum Cav.

Synonyms: *Thelypteris serrata* (Cav.) Alston

Family: Thelypteridaceae (marsh fern)

FNAI Ranks: G5/S1

Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered



Leaves one pinnate; pinnae to 3.5 cm wide. Growing in floodplain swamp at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Fern with large, evergreen **fronds** 1 - 2 m long, pinna margins serrate with prominent, curved teeth; pinnae to 3.5 cm wide. **Sori** in many, parallel rows between veins on underside of leaflets.

Similar Species: See Related Rare Species.

Related Rare Species: Lattice-vein fern (*Meniscium reticulatum*), state-endangered, is also a large evergreen fern with fronds to about 2 m long; pinna margins entire or crenate (though often also undulate); pinnae to 6 cm wide. It occurs in wet hammocks and cypress swamps in Broward, Collier, Dade, and Lee counties. Stately maiden fern (*Pelazoneuron abruptum* var. *grande*), state-endangered, has fronds to 1.8 m long divided into finely cut leaflets, similar to the common marsh fern (*Pelazoneuron kunthii*); it occurs only in swamps in Collier County. Grid-scale maiden fern (*Pelazoneuron patens*), state-endangered, also resembles the common maiden fern; it occurs in 2 rockland hammocks in Dade County.

Habitat: Cypress swamps, sloughs and floodplains; occasionally epiphytic.

toothed maiden fern

Meniscium serratum

Best Survey Season: All year.

Range-wide Distribution: Central and s. peninsular FL; West Indies; s. Mexico, Central America, and n. South America (south to Argentina).

Conservation Status: Toothed maiden fern is critically imperiled, occurs in several conservation areas, and is also somewhat protected by wetland regulations.

Protection and Management: Avoid logging, draining, or developing wetlands.

References: Coile 2000, FNA 1993, IRC 1999, Lellinger and Evans 1985, Nelson 2000, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2023, Wunderlin 1998, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.



Pinna margins serrate; pinnae to 3.5 cm wide; sori elongate. Growing in floodplain swamp at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Veins forming parallel rows of more than five areoles between the pinna margin and the main vein. Growing in floodplain swamp at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



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