PLANT FACT SHEET

Bowenia serrulata (W. Bull) C. Chamberlaine

GENUS *Bowenia* **FAMILY** Zamiaceae

COMMON NAMES Byfield fern

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Tuber, Root

CAUTION The leaves and seeds are toxic.
The roots are baked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A small palm like plant. It has a trunk which is underground. The leaves are 1 m long and arch over. They are feather-like. The leaves are twice divided. The leaflets are leathery and oval. They are shiny green and have deep teeth along the edge. New growth is shiny bronze. Male and female flowers are separate and on separate plants. The male cones are oblong. The female cones are round. They occur in groups at ground level. The seeds are round and grey. They are 2 cm across.

HABITAT

It grows in highland rainforests in Queensland. Near Rockhampton it grows from sea level to 700 m altitude. It needs some shade. It suits tropical, subtropical and warm temperate climates. It can only tolerate light frost. In Cairns Botanical Gardens.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Only one new frond is produced each year.

NOTES

There are 2-3 Bowenia species. It has also been put in the family Strangeriaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/197ab8e9-49eb-4bd5-9bca-5a5320003936