PLANT FACT SHEET

Sphaeropteris cooperi (Hook. ex F. Muell.) R. M. Tryon

GENUS *Sphaeropteris* **FAMILY** Cyatheaceae

COMMON NAMES Cicatrice tree-fern, Scaly tree fern, Straw Tree Fern

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Growing heart, Fiddlehead, Starch, Leaves, Fronds

The central growing heart is eaten after processing. Starch is extracted.

DESCRIPTION

A slender, tall tree fern. It grows 12 m high. The trunk is woody and 20 cm across. The fronds are twice divided. They can be dull or shiny green on top and paler underneath. The fronds are 4 m long by 1 m wide. They are long and soft and have a dense covering of brown scales. When the fronds break off they leave oval scars.

HABITAT

It grows in tropical and subtropical rainforests. It grows in most forests in Queensland and New South Wales in Australia. The roots need to be kept moist. It is frost tender when young. It can withstand exposure in moist positions. It grows up to 1400 m altitude. Hobart Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from spores.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is a fast growing fern.

NOTES

There are about 800 Cyathea species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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