



*Schizaea bifida*

Forked Comb-fern

AUS	SA	AMLR	Endemism	Life History
-	V	E	-	Perennial

Family SCHIZAEACEAE



Photo: M. Fagg ©ANBG

### Conservation Significance

In SA, the majority of the distribution is confined within the AMLR, disjunct from the remaining distribution in other States. Within the AMLR the species' relative area of occupancy is classified as 'Very Restricted'. Relative to all AMLR extant species, the species' taxonomic uniqueness is classified as 'Very High'.<sup>6</sup>

### Description

Fern; rhizome creeping or ascending, covered at first with brown hairs; stipes wiry; sporangia large, brown, in two to four rows. Stipe of frond is rough, usually divided and angular.<sup>4</sup>

### Distribution and Population

Also occurs in QLD, NSW, VIC and TAS. In SA occurs in SL and SE regions. There is also a record that exists on KI but does not exist in the SA census.<sup>1,3</sup> Widespread in eastern Australia along coastal areas.<sup>2</sup>

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records restricted to the Mount Compass/Hindmarsh Valley area.<sup>6</sup>

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records indicate it also used to

occur around Deep Creek/Tunkalilla.<sup>6</sup>

### Habitat

Known habitats include peatlands; forest, shrub or open bogs; and swampy or moist soils amongst grasses or *Gleichenia microphylla*.<sup>10</sup>

Within the AMLR recorded habitat includes:

- Glen Shera Swamp, near Mount Compass: in *Leptospermum continentale*/ *Sprengelia incarnata* shrubland with sedge understorey, also with mixed leptospermum shrubland with emergent *Viminaria juncea* or *Acacia retinodes* and sedge understorey
- Hindmarsh Valley Reservoir: heath on white sand, near *Pteridium esculentum*, *Leptospermum myrsinoides* and *Eucalyptus baxteri*
- Mount Compass: swamp-land, growing on mounds with *Schoenus tenuissimus* and *Empodisma minus*
- Tookayerta and Finniss Catchments: wetland, in *Leptospermum continentale* shrubland with sedge and fern understorey, also *Phragmites* and/or *Typha* grassland with emergent *Viminaria juncea*, *Acacia retinodes* and sedge understorey.<sup>8,9</sup>

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Wetland and Heathy Woodland.<sup>6</sup>

Within the AMLR the species' degree of habitat specialisation is classified as 'High'.<sup>6</sup>

### Biology and Ecology

Grows from rhizome. Robust fire response, unlikely to be affected by repeated fires.<sup>7</sup> Observed to re-sprout after fire at Glen Shera Swamp (Taplin *pers. comm.*)

### Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the majority of the AMLR distribution occurs in Ngarrindjeri Nation (bordering southern Kaurna and Peramangk Nations).<sup>6</sup>

### Threats

Threats include altered water regimes (including dams), weed invasion (e.g. Sweet Vernal Grass, Lesser Hawkbit, Greater Bird's-foot) and livestock grazing.<sup>9</sup> Also drought/climate change.<sup>5</sup>

Approximately half of known distribution occurs within 2 km of confirmed or suspected *Phytophthora* infestations.<sup>6</sup>

### Further information:

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<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/>

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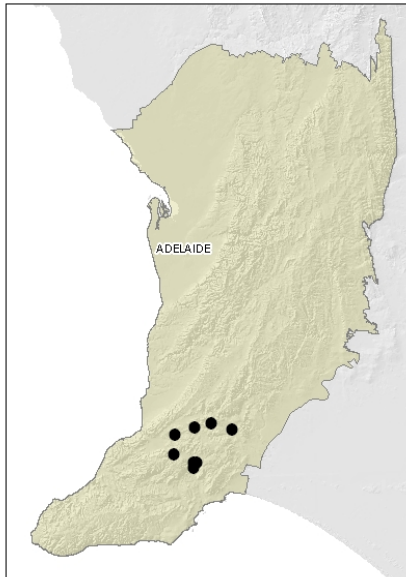
Prepared as part of the Regional Recovery Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities of Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia 2009 - 2014





Additional current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

### Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.<sup>6</sup> Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMLR.

### References

Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).

**1** Barker, W. R., Barker, R. M., Jessop, J. P. and Vonow, H. P., eds. (2005). *Census of South Australian Vascular Plants, 5th Edition*. Botanic Gardens of Adelaide & State Herbarium, Adelaide.

**2** Botanic Gardens Trust (1993). *PlantNET - The Plant Information Network System of Botanic Gardens Trust*. Available from <http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au> (accessed September 2007).

**3** Council of Heads of Australian Herbaria (2002). *Australia's Virtual Herbarium*. Available from <http://www.flora.sa.gov.au/avh/> (accessed July 2007).

**4** Department for Environment and Heritage *Electronic Flora of South Australia species Fact Sheet: Schizaea bifida*. Available from <http://www.flora.sa.gov.au> (accessed September 2007).

**5** Department for Environment and Heritage. (2007). Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Expert Flora Workshop, Unpublished Notes. Participants: Bickerton, D., Croft, T., Jury, T., Lang, P., Prescott, A., Quarmby, J. and Smith, K., Adelaide.

**6** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Project Database*. Unpublished data extracted and edited from BDBSA, SA Herbarium (July 2007) and other sources.

**7** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Combined Fire Response Database*. Unpublished data, extracted September 2007.

**8** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *State Herbarium of South Australia Database*. Unpublished data, extracted October 2007.

**9** Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Wetlands Inventory Database of South Australia*. Unpublished data, extracted October 2007.

**10** Jessop, J. P. and Toelken, H. R., eds. (1986). *Flora of South Australia*. South Australian Government Printing Division, Adelaide.

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