

Rare Plants of Louisiana



Ceratopteris pteridoides - floating antler-fern Water Fern Family (Parkeriaceae)

Rarity Rank: S2/G5?

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure



Sterile fronds on a floating plant of *Ceratopteris pteridoides*

Range: FL and LA, south West Indies, Central and South America; also southeastern Asia in Vietnam

Recognition:

- Dimorphic fern with two types of fronds: fertile and sterile
- Sterile fronds form a basal rosette and are broad, thin, glabrous, with net-like venation; simple with pinnate to palmate lobing; ultimate segments round, the basal lobes opposite.
- Petiole bases are inflated to aid in floating
- Fertile fronds are erect, longer than the sterile fronds, and have very narrowly divided segments with in-rolled margins.
- Buds or small vegetative plantlets present on sterile frond margins and eventually separate to form new plants

Light Requirement: Full sun to shade

Wetland Indicator Status:

OBL – almost always in wetlands

Habitat:

Occurs in swamps, sluggish bayous, and ditches and canals; usually floating, occasionally stranded in mud during low water periods.

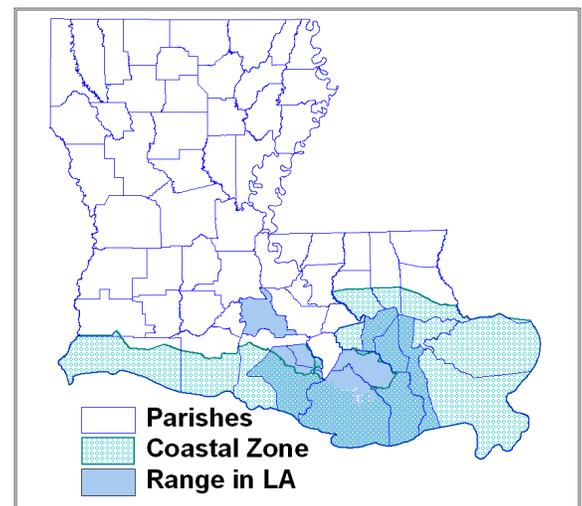
Threats:

Given its aquatic habitat and ability to float freely, there seem to be few threats; salt water intrusion is presumably a threat

Beneficial Management Practices:

Conduct more survey work to detect additional populations and gain more status information

LA River Basins: Pontchartrain, Barataria, Terrebonne, Atchafalaya, Vermilion-Teche



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Below: Typical *Ceratopteris pteridoides* habitat.
Maurepas Swamp WMA

Above: *Ceratopteris pteridoides* at Maurepas Swamp WMA; associated here with abundant *Salvinia minima* which is a problem exotic.



References:

- Lloyd, R. M. 1993. Parkeriaceae. *In* Flora of North America Editorial Committee [eds], Flora of North America north of Mexico, Vol. 2: Pteridophytes and Gymnosperms, 119 – 121. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.
- Thieret, J. W. 1980. Louisiana Ferns and Fern Allies. Lafayette Natural History Museum and The University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, LA. 123 pp.
- USDA, NRCS. 2007. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.

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For more information, please visit our Web pages at

www.wlf.la.gov/wildlife/louisiana-natural-heritage-program or 225-765-2811

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