

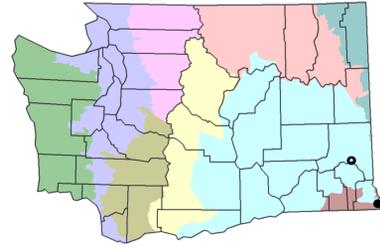
Cheilanthes feei T. Moore

Fee's lip-fern

Pteridaceae - maidenhair fern family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S1



General Description: Perennial fern with short, branched rhizomes, forming a scaly, multiheaded persistent base. Leaves 4-20 cm long, evergreen, but shriveled when dry. Petioles dark purplish brown to black, sparsely to moderately pubescent with long, loosely spreading (seldom appressed), tawny hairs; also bearing a few brown scales at the base. Leaf blades lacking scales; lower surface densely covered with tawny or rust-colored woolly hairs, upper surface green, sparsely hairy. Blades 3-13 x 1.5-4 cm, linear-oblong to lanceolate, 3-pinnate at base. Pinnae in 6-12 opposite or offset pairs which are divided again; ultimate pinnules round to slightly oblong, beadlike, small, 1-3 mm long. Margins loosely rolled under but not covering the sporangia.

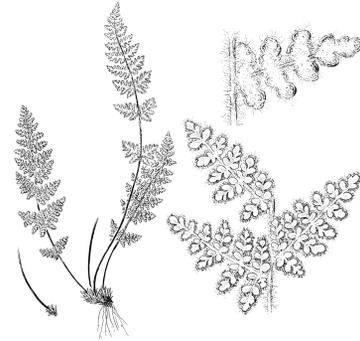


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Press

Reproductive Characteristics: Sporangia are spread over the whole lower surface. Identifiable throughout the year; it sporulates from late spring to fall.

Identification Tips: *Cheilanthes gracillima* is distinguished by the linear scales on the rachis, midveins, petioles, and underside of the leaflets, and oblong (rarely oval) ultimate pinnules.

Range: B.C., Alberta, south to CA, AZ, NM, TX, and adjacent Mexico, north to WI, and east to KY and VA.

Habitat/Ecology: In arid climates, on limestone or sandstone cliff crevices, outcrops, rocky areas, and steep slopes. Associated species include ditrichum moss (*Ditrichum flexicaule*), candle snuffer moss (*Encalypta vulgaris*), Vaucher's hypnum moss (*Hypnum vaucheri*), Leiberg's bluegrass (*Poa leibergii*), Wallace's spikemoss (*Selaginella wallacei*), stonecrop (*Sedum leibergii*), spiny greasebush (*Glossopetalon spinescens*), Riggins penstemon (*Penstemon triphyllus*), western white clematis (*Clematis ligusticifolia*), and thymeleaf sandwort (*Arenaria serpyllifolia*). Elevations in WA: 260-800 m (850-2650 ft).



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Comments: This species is rare in several states, B.C., and Alberta. There are fewer than 5 locations in WA. Threats include mining, invasive nonnative plants, and dam construction, which may have flooded some habitat.



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References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 2.