

Australian Tree Fern

Cyathea cooperi



**Do not
plant this
in your yard!**



Photo: Forest and Kim Starr



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Photo: Sheldon Navie

Often mistaken for a native hāpu'u, Australian Tree Fern (ATF) is spreading into native forest areas in Volcano, Laupahoehoe, Kona, and other parts of the Big Island.

The Australian Tree Fern is considered one of Hawai'i's most invasive horticultural plants.



www.PlantPono.org



High Risk

Description:

Tree fern that grows up to 40' tall with a skinny trunk. Trunk is covered with diamond shaped scars from old fronds.

Fronds:

Triangular, intricate fronds emerge from the trunk and are covered with stiff white hairs (unlike native hāpu'u, which have a darker golden to brown coloring). Fronds are generally less arching and more flattened than hapu'u.

Spores:

Spores travel on wind. Spores from the Australian Tree Fern have been known to fly 7 miles from the parent plant.

Impacts and Harm:

Australian Tree Fern grows 5 times faster, produces 3 times more fronds, and many more spores than the native hāpu'u ferns, and have easily invaded native forests. Lacking the soft, thick fiber wrapping of native hāpu'u, ATF do not provide the same habitat to other native plants and insects as hāpu'u.

Plant this native instead:



Hāpu'u (Cibotium spp.)

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