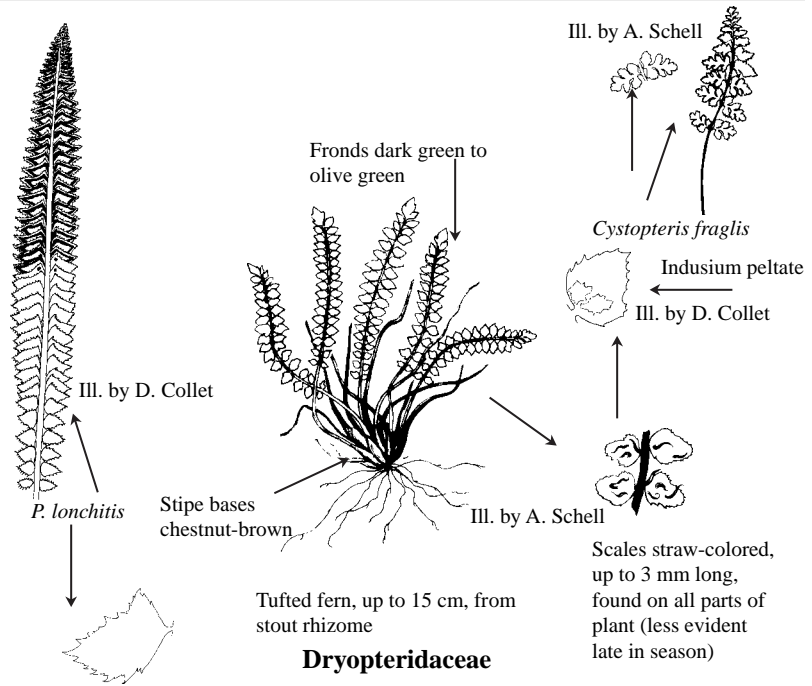


Aleutian shield-fern

Polystichum aleuticum
Christensen in Hultén



Distribution: Endemic to Adak and Atka Islands of the central Aleutian Islands. It has not been seen on Atka since its original collection in 1932.

Habitat: Cliffs and rock outcrops on east facing volcanic slopes, 1,200 ft. to 1,725 ft. elevation. Found in protected gullies, grottos, and on ledges, commonly associated with *Carex macrochaeta*, *Salix rotundifolia*, *Anemone narcissiflora*, and *Arnica unalaschensis*.

Similar Species: *P. lonchitis* (L.) Roth is taller (up to 60 cm) and coarser, with coriaceous leaves and strongly spiny pinnae. Sterile or immature fronds of *Cystopteris fragilis* (L.) Bernh. lack the scales and chestnut-brown stipe bases and have pinnae that are more dissected and lacking bristle-tipped teeth. *Woodsia alpina* (Bolton) S. F. Gray (not found in the Aleutian Islands) has stipes jointed near the base, lacks the chestnut-brown stipe bases and bristle-tipped pinnae teeth, but has an indusium of hair-like segments. Very closely related to the east Asian *P. lachenense* (Hook.) Bedd. whose nearest location, however, is in northern Japan (Hokkaido).

References: Christensen 1936, 1938; Hultén 1968; Lipkin 1985c; Murray and Lipkin 1987; Smith 1985, 1987, 1988; Talbot et al. 1995a, b.



Closeup of Polystichum aleuticum photo by R. Lipkin



Polystichum aleuticum habitat photo by R. Lipkin

