

IDENTIFICATION: The Alabama streak sorus fern (*Thelypteris pilosa* var. *alabamensis*) is a member of the fern family Thelypteridaceae. It is a small evergreen fern with four to eight inch deeply scalloped leaves.

Plants typically occur on the ceilings of sandstone overhangs, on ledges beneath overhangs, and on exposed cliff faces. It needs cool shady conditions to persist. Sites are kept moist by seepage over the sandstone from upslope runoff. Water vapor from nearby streams provides a beneficial increase in humidity.



It was [designated as threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973](#) on July 8, 1992. All known populations are along a 3.25 mile segment of the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River within the boundaries of the Bankhead National Forest. Most populations are on U.S. Forest Service property but a few are on private property.

The [recovery plan](#) for the Alabama streak sorus fern states the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service will consider the species for delisting when the population on the Sipsey Fork, and at least two other populations in different drainages, are protected and determined to be viable. No critical habitat designation occurred as a result of this species being listed as threatened.

FORESTRY CONSIDERATIONS: Logging is unlikely to occur on inhabited sites. Harvesting or other forestry activities upslope from occupied sites could adversely affect the microhabitat. The species is highly dependent on upslope runoff, seepage, and a closed canopy to maintain soil moisture and a relatively high humidity level. Forestry impacts should be minimal if Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry are implemented on upslope sites.

DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY: Documented only in Winston County but the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service believes it may also be found in Cullman, Franklin, Lawrence, Marion and Walker counties.

Photo and Text Credit: Threatened and Endangered Species of Alabama: A Guide to Assist with Forestry Activities, Second Edition, USFWS



This information is provided by the Alabama Forestry Commission
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