

# *Platycerium superbum*



Spore pattern and sheath leaf

***Platycerium superbum***: Staghorn

Family: *Polypodiaceae*

Genus: *Platycerium* from Greek *platys* (broad, wide) and *keras* (a horn), in reference to the shape of the fertile frond

Species: *superbum* from the Latin *superbus* (superb, majestic).

This is usually an epiphytic fern. The fronds are dimorphic. The sterile or nest fronds are kidney shaped, embracing the host to form a humus collecting bowl behind the new fronds. The fertile fronds are usually paired, strap-shaped being forked in the last two-thirds, and hang down. Spores form a large patch on the underside at the base of the first fork. This is one of the most beautiful and spectacular of ferns. They resent dense shade, liking lots of filtered light and protection from drying wind. They like some humidity with watering to keep the humus bowl damp but not so wet that it rots.