

Asplenium vespertinum Maxon, WESTERN SPLEENWORT. Perennial herb, evergreen, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, rosetted, generally < 20 cm tall; shoots appearing glabrous; rhizomes short-creeping to erect, < 30 × 1–4 mm, rarely branched, scaly, the scales linear-lanceolate, 1.5–2.5(–3) × 0.2–0.3 mm, with thick, dark purplish brown to black network, entire or sometimes minutely toothed near acuminate to threadlike tip. **Leaves (fronds):** helically alternate, odd-1-pinnately compound with 7–30 primary leaflets per side opposite to alternate and pinnately lobed at tip, (70–)140–200 mm long (including petiole); petiole (stipe) less than 1/4 of leaf, lustrous reddish brown or purplish black throughout, sometimes J-shaped at base, sparsely scaly at base to hairy or glabrous above, the scales like those of rhizome but generally narrow, the dark purplish brown to black threadlike hairs coarse and curved or wavy; blade linear to narrowly oblanceolate in outline, 50–200(–300) × 10–25 mm; rachis reddish brown to purplish black; primary leaflets oblong, 2–12 × 1–4 mm, the smaller leaflets either basal or approaching tip, rounded to tapered and mostly asymmetric at base, alternately lobed on margins with to 4–5 per edge (fewer on smaller leaflets), obtuse at tip, pinnately veined with lateral veins free and not reaching margin. **Sori:** 4–9 per primary leaflet, on both sides of midrib on lower surface; indusial together becoming a continuous cover of sporangia at maturity, oblong to ± kidney-shaped or semicircular, 0.4–1.1 × 0.2–0.35 mm, each oriented diagonally from midrib (parallel with each other), entire, irregularly short-dentate or short-crenate, or sometimes lobed on free margin, attached on veinlet side of sorus and opening toward midrib and tip, persistent. **Sporangia:** ± 0.25 mm across, orangey brown, stalked. **Spores:** elliptic-ovoid, ca. 0.12 mm long, with a linear scar. January–December (fertile spores apparently always present).

Native. Perennial herb known only in shaded canyons and slopes south of Lake Sherwood. *Asplenium vespertinum* has pinnately compound, narrow leaves.
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