

# Tree Facts

by Sophie Fern



On the next few pages, you will find information about some endemic and native trees in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Do you know the names of these trees?  
The answers are on the inside back cover.



## Pōhutukawa

### Description

Endemic  
Has a twisted, curvy trunk with wide-spreading branches

### Height

Up to 20 metres

### Leaves

Oval, about 8 cm by 3 cm, dark green and glossy with fine white hairs on the underside

### Flowers

Bushy, with lots of single strands (stamens), usually bright red

### Where found

In coastal areas throughout Aotearoa

### Interesting fact

The pōhutukawa is often called the New Zealand Christmas tree because it's usually covered in red flowers in December.



# Kōwhai

**Description** Endemic  
Has smooth grey bark and tangled branches

**Height** Up to 25 metres

**Leaves** Small leaflets, about 1–3 cm long, growing in pairs along the leaf stem

**Flowers** Bright yellow, hanging down in bunches

**Where found** Throughout Aotearoa, on the coast and in forests and bush

**Interesting facts** Tūī, kererū, and korimako (bellbirds) like to feed on the nectar in the flowers. The flowers can be used to make a yellow dye. Kōwhai is the Māori word for yellow.



# Tī kōuka or cabbage tree

**Description** Native  
Has a long, straight trunk, with rough, thick bark, and long, pointed leaves at the top

**Height** Up to 20 metres

**Leaves** Long and narrow, up to 1 metre long

**Flowers** Tiny white, scented flowers in spring, followed by blue-white berries

**Where found** Common in most parts of the country, often in open areas and wetlands

**Interesting fact** Early Māori used tī kōuka leaves to make ropes, food baskets, clothing, and shoes.



## Mānuka or Kahikātoa

### Description

Native

Usually a small, prickly tree or shrub but can grow taller

### Height

Usually 2-5 metres

### Leaves

Small, 0.5-2 cm long, oval with sharp, pointed ends

### Flowers

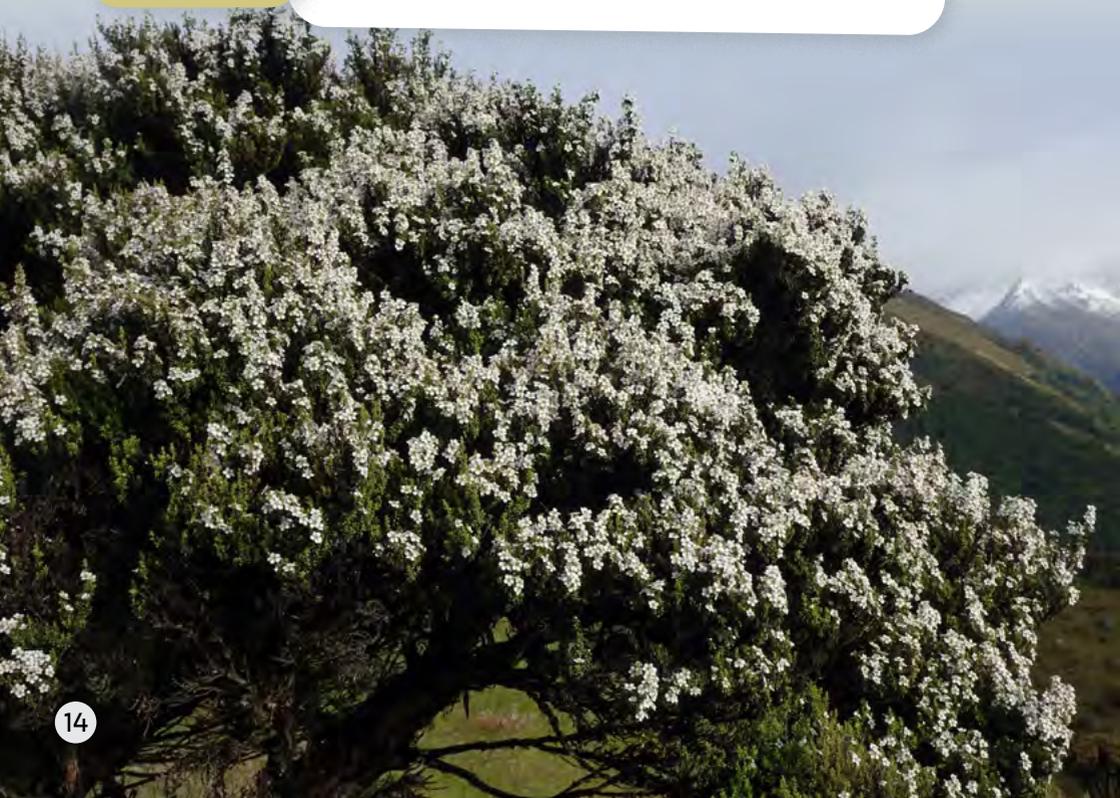
Small and white (or sometimes pink)

### Where found

Throughout Aotearoa in dry areas

### Interesting facts

Mānuka can be used for making medicine and to attract bees for making honey.



## Rangiora

### Description

Endemic

A small bushy tree or shrub

### Height

Up to 6 metres

### Leaves

Large, up to 25 cm long and 20 cm wide, with white fuzz on the underside

### Flowers

Bunches of tiny white or cream flowers in spring

### Where found

Throughout Aotearoa in scrub and lowland forest

### Interesting fact

Some early Pākehā settlers called rangiora "bushman's toilet paper", so you can imagine what they used the leaves for!



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