

Tree Facts

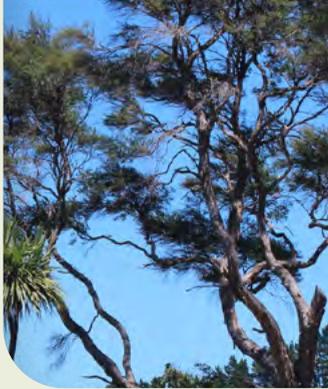
by Sophie Fern



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

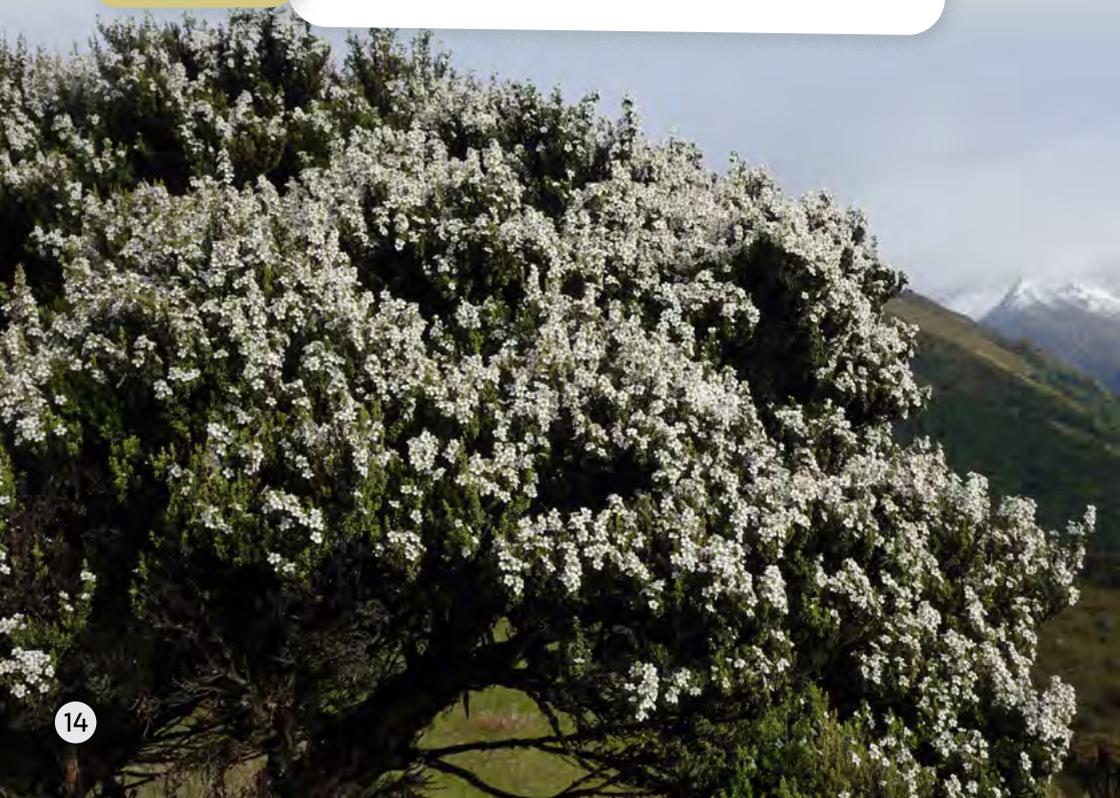
Small and white (or sometimes pink)

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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