



## *Pittosporum crassifolium*

### Common Name(s):

Karo

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

### Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand, Great Barrier and North Island. In the North indigenous from Te Pahi south to about White Cliffs, and East Cape. Widely naturalised further south to Wellington. Naturalised in the South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. Also naturalised on Norfolk Island, and in Hawaii.

### Habitat:

Coastal and offshore islands. Favouring steep slopes, cliff faces, boulder beaches, rock stacks and the margins of petrel burrowed land. Sometimes forms major canopy dominant on offshore islands, and on occasion can be a significant component of dune forest. Often an urban weed because its fruits/seeds are avidly taken by indigenous and exotic birds and dispersed widely.

### Features\*:

Gynodioecious shrubs to small trees 1-10 m tall. Trunk stout, grey-black, often distinctly lenticillate. Branches and branchlets erect, dark grey-black or brown, immature branchlets densely invested in grey-white or white tomentum, this maturing black. Leaves alternate, usually densely crowded toward branch and branchlet apices. Petioles 4-14 x 1-3 mm, grey-white to grey-black tomentose. Leaves 30-100 x 10-30 mm, obovate to oblanceolate, apices obtuse to acute, base attenuate, margins entire, both surfaces densely white, grey-white or brown tomentose when young, soon glabrate above but remain densely covered in dirty white or grey-white, appressed tomentum beneath, very coriaceous, margins thickened and often strongly revolute, surfaces often blistered with insect galls. Flowers in terminal 1-10-flowered fascicles; pedicels 6-50 mm, accrescent in fruit, tomentose, subtended by a whorl of leaves and numerous, 3-15 mm long, caducous, brown-tomentose, ciliate bud scales. Sepals 7-11 x 1.5-3 mm, oblong to linear-lanceolate, acute, greyish-white, dirty white or brown tomentose on outer surfaces, inner surface only toward the middle, margins ciliate. Petals 10-16 x 3-5 mm, oblanceolate to lanceolate, subacute, free to base, recurved at apices, dark red, purple, yellow, pink or white; stamens 5-9 mm long, anthers 1-3 x 0.5-1.5 mm, sagittiform to elliptic-oblong. Ovary 3-6 x 2-5 mm, white or grey-white tomentose; style 3-2.5 mm long, stigma capitate or 3-lobed truncate. Capsules woody, 10-30 x 10-30 mm, (2-)-3(-4)-valved, woody, trigonous, sometimes 2-4-lobed

### Flowering:

August - October

### Fruiting:

September - August (Old fruits persist on trees)

### Threats:

Not Threatened. However, the fruits are eaten by rats, and on rodent infested offshore islands this species rarely regenerates.

### \*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 30 August 2006. Description adapted from Cooper (1956).

### References and further reading:

Cooper, R.C. 1956: The Australian and New Zealand species of *Pittosporum*. *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 43: 87-188

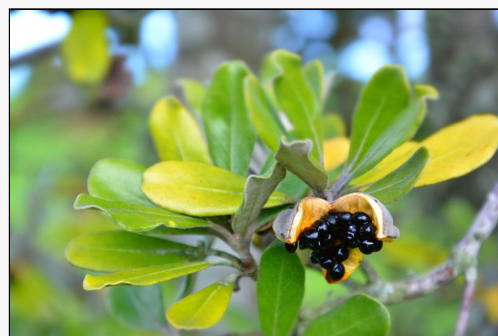
### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=1133](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1133)



**Caption:** Masterton

**Photographer:** John Barkla



**Caption:** Meola Reef, Westmere, Auckland

**Photographer:** John Sawyer