



Podocarpus laetus

Common Name(s):

Mountain totara, Hall's totara, thin-barked totara, totara-kiri-kotukutuku

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands.

Habitat:

Lowland, montane to lower subalpine forest (but notably more common in montane forest). Often found on impoverished soils, immature (skeletal) soils, or sites that are naturally stressed by drought or extreme temperature fluctuations.

Features*:

Robust dioecious conifer up to 20 m tall. Trunk stout, 1-1.5 m diam., clad in papery, thin, freely flaking reddish-grey bark. Trunk without branches at base, branches slender, erect, spreading or somewhat drooping. Leaf bud significantly broader than the diam., of the branchlet, surrounded by caducous, papery, ovate bracts. Leaves yellow-green, green, or brownish-green, erect, leathery; juvenile 25-50 x 4-5 mm, adults 20-30 x 3-4 mm., narrow-linear to linear-lanceolate, acute to acuminate, apex very pungent, mid-vein distinct. Male cones (strobili) axillary, 10-25 mm, solitary or up to 5 on a common peduncle. Female branchlets axillary, ovules solitary or paired. Receptacle of 2-4 scales, irregularly elliptic-oblong to obovate-oblong, maturing as a red, swollen, succulent, sweet tasting "fruit" this surmounted by a 1(-2) elliptic, elliptic-oblong or ovate-oblong, (5-)6.5-8.5 mm long, grey nut brown or dark brown (green when fresh) seed.

Fruiting:

Flowering:

(August-)
October (-
December)

Fruits take a year or so to ripen, and may be found throughout the year, usually peaking at about the same time that cones are produced. They are most frequently seen between April and May

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (8 January 2005). Description adapted from Kirk 1889 and Allan 1961).

References and further reading:

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Kirk, T. 1889: The Forest Flora of New Zealand. Wellington, Government Printer.

Molloy, B.P.J. 1985: The continuing saga of native conifer nomenclature. *DSIR Botany Division Newsletter* 102: 26-27.

Molloy, B.P.J. 2015: The correct name for the New Zealand endemic conifer Hall's totara (Araucariales: Podocarpaceae). *Phytotaxa* 220: 101-116.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1174



Caption: Seeds of *Podocarpus cunninghamii*

Photographer: Wayne Bennett



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