



## *Pseudopanax arboreus*

### **Common Name(s):**

Fivefinger, five finger, whauwhaupaku

### **Current Threat Status (2012):**

Not Threatened

### **Distribution:**

Endemic. Widespread (though rare in Central Otago). North and South Islands

### **Habitat:**

Coastal to montane (10-750 m a.s.l.). Moist broadleaf forest. Frequently epiphytic. A frequent component of secondary forest. Streamsides and forest margins.

### **Features\*:**

Us. Dioecious. Small multi-branched tree to 8 m tall, branches and branchlets brittle. Leaves alternate, leaflets 5-7 (us. 5), palmate. Petioles c. 15-20 cm long, sheathing branchlet at base. Petiolules c. 3-5 cm long, pale green. Leaflets obovate-oblong to oblong-cuneate, thinly coriaceous, coarsely serrate-dentate, acute or acuminate to obtuse; midveins and main lateral veins obvious above and below; terminal lamina 10-20 x 4-7 cm. Inflorescence and panicle, terminal, compound; flowers usually unisexual; 8-20 primary rays (branchlets), up to 10 cm long; 15-20 secondary rays; umbellules with 10-15 flowers in each. Calyx truncate or obscurely 5-toothed; flowers c. 5 mm diam., sweet-scented; petals 5, white to pink flushed, ovate to triangular, acute; stamens 5, obvious, filaments c. = petals; ovary 2-loculed, each containing 1(-2) ovules; style branches 2, spreading. Fruit fleshy, 5-8 mm diam., style branches retained on an apical disc, very dark purple, laterally compressed. Seeds 2(-3) per fruit, wrinkled, 3-6 mm long.

### **Flowering:**

June to August

### **Fruiting:**

August to February

### **Threats:**

Not Threatened. In places the petiolules of *Pseudopanax arboreus* (and other fleshy-leaved *Pseudopanax* species) are a conspicuous element of possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) diet and the forest floor can become littered with discarded leaflets.

### **\*Attribution:**

Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb and Simpson (2001).

### **References and further reading:**

Allan, H.H. 1961. Flora of NZ, Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington

Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch.

### **For more information, visit:**

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=1194](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1194)



**Caption:** *Pseudopanax arboreus*

**Photographer:** Wayne Bennett



**Caption:** Flowers of *Pseudopanax arboreus*

**Photographer:** Wayne Bennett