



Pittosporum turneri

Common Name(s):

Turner's kohuhu, tent pole tree

Current Threat Status (2012):

Nationally Vulnerable

Distribution:

Endemic. Confined to the central North Island, from southern Pureora to the Ruahine Range. Formerly present near Otorohanga.

Habitat:

A montane to subalpine small tree of forest/frost flat margins and grey scrub developed alongside streams.

Features*:

Gynodioecious, small tree up to 8 m tall. Growth form columnar, juveniles and sub adults distinctly divaricating. Branches and branchlets of seedlings and saplings up to 1 m tall, sparse, spreading, divaricating, more or less interlacing and filiramulate; sub adult branches and branchlets, numerous, strongly divaricating, hexagonally interlacing and filiramulate; adult branches erect to shortly spreading, more or less fastigiated, weakly divaricating, non-filiramulate. Seedling leaves 5-20 x 2-4 mm, linear, deeply lobed or coarsely toothed, sometimes pinnatifid to lyrate-pinnatifid, bronze-green, red-green to cream or grey-green, often blemished with darker tones of red or brown. Sub adult leaves, firmly fleshy to coriaceous, 3-10 x 2-6 mm, red-green, cream, bronze-green, often flushed pink or maroon, linear to lanceolate, sometimes obovate or narrow-obovate, usually irregularly lobed, toothed or pinnatifid; these forms gradually giving way to adult foliage toward top of tree. Adult leaves rather coriaceous. Petioles stout, 1-2 mm long, fleshy. Leaf lamina 30-60 x 5-10 mm, dark green, green, often flushed with red; oblanceolate, obovate to narrowly obovate, clavate to linear-lanceolate, base cuneate to attenuate, apex obtuse to subacute, margins entire to weakly lobulate. Flowers in terminal 4-10-15-flowered umbels. Pedicels 10-15 mm long. Flowers night-fragrant. Sepals 5, 3-6 mm long, ovate-lanceolate, acute, pale green, sparsely pilose hairy. Petals 5, 8-10 mm, lanceolate, apex obtuse, recurving almost to base at anthesis, pink, red-pink, margins often darker than central portion; sometimes completely white. Male flowers with 5 functional stamens and one rudimentary or functional stigma, anthers yellow. Female flowers with 5 rudimentary stamen, stigma globose. Capsules subglobose, 7-10 mm diameter, 2-valved, valves weakly woody to woody, initially dark green maturing grey-black. Mucilage dark red. Seeds 5-8, globose to irregularly globose, black, surface glossy.

Flowering:

October to December.

Fruiting:

January - March.

Threats:

The adult foliage of *Pittosporum turneri* is a favourite of possums and it is suspected that saplings are eaten by deer and goats. Several historic sites were eliminated due to land development for grazing and forestry. At most sites the species is vulnerable to weed invasion, a constant problem as the habitat *P. turneri* usually occupies requires frequent disturbance to maintain itself. Because of this requirement the species is also vulnerable to habitat loss through natural succession as vegetation matures. Some populations exhibit skewed sex ratios, others lack adult specimens, while others have hybridism issues with *P. divaricatum* Cockayne.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange 30 August 2004. Description from de Lange et al. (2010).

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand, Christchurch, Canterbury University Press.

Rogers, G. 1988. Parentless *Pittosporum turneri*. Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin, 44: 26-36

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=89



Caption: Waituhi Forest

Photographer: Gillian Crowcroft



Caption: Upper Kuratau,

Hauangarua

Photographer: Gillian Crowcroft