

# Beilschmiedia tarairi

## COMMON NAME

taraire

## SYNONYMS

*Laurus tarairi* A.Cunn., *Nesodaphne tarairi* (A.Cunn.) Hook.f.

## FAMILY

Lauraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Beilschmiedia tarairi* (A.Cunn.) Benth. et Hook.f. ex Kirk

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

BEITAR

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n=24

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Common canopy tree of northern North Island. Leaves large, leathery, oval, silvery underneath, margins curved. Twigs and young leaves with reddish down. Flowers inconspicuous. Fruit very large, dark purple, glossy, held upright, containing a single large elliptical seed which has a network of veins on the papery surface.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Confined to the North Island where it most common north of Auckland and Thames. However it also occurs in scattered pockets in the west south of Port Waikato to the Kawhia Harbour, inland at Pukemokemoke (near Tauhei), and in the east it occurs very locally from the eastern end of Papatea Bay to East Cape.

## HABITAT

Common canopy forming tree in lowland and lower montane forests north of Auckland. Often associated with kauri (*Agathis australis*), and pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*), and on basalt rocks and soils puriri (*Vitex lucens*).



Taraire leaves. Photographer: DoC



Colville, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

## FEATURES

Evergreen tree up to 22 m tall, with very broad canopy crown. Trunk to 1 m diam. Bark smooth, dark brown. Branches stout, spreading. Branchlets, young leaves, petioles and young inflorescences densely clad in reddish brown tomentum. Foliage closely alternate, erecto-patent, simple, leathery. Petioles (8-)10(-12) mm. Leaves (36-)50-72(-85) x (26-)34-48(-56) mm, wide-elliptic to wide-obovate, dark green and glabrous above, bullate, glaucous below, with stout veins covered in reddish brown tomentum, margins entire, apex rounded, retuse and mucronate. Inflorescence and erect, axillary panicle up to 100 mm long. Flowers sexually perfect, 3-5 mm diam., greenish, often partially clothed in dense reddish-brown tomentum, perianth cleft into 6, stamens 12. Fruit an erect, ellipsoid to ovoid drupe (28-)30(-35) x (14-)16(-18) mm, 1-seeded, pericarp fleshy, dark purple when ripe, covered in waxy glaucous bloom.

## SIMILAR TAXA

A very distinct species whose broad, dark-green, bullate leaves with their distinctive glaucous undersides, and large, erect plum-like dark purple fruits serve to immediately distinguish it from all other indigenous trees and shrubs.

## FLOWERING

(September-) November (-December)

## FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

## FRUITING

March - November

## LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy drupes are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Better germination is achieved if the flesh surrounding the seed is cleaned off.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 12 February 2004. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Wright (1984).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Wellington, Government Printer.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

Wilcox, M.D. 2001. Establishment of forest monitoring plots in Kirks Bush Papakura with special reference to Taraire (*Beilschmiedia tarairi*). Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 56: 76-79.

Wright, A. E. 1984: *Beilschmiedia* Nees (Lauraceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 22: 109-125.

## CITATION

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/beilschmiedia-tarairi/>