Hedycarya arborea

**COMMON NAME**
Porokaiwhiri, Pigeonwood

**SYNONYMS**

**FAMILY**
Monimiaceae

**AUTHORITY**

**FLORA CATEGORY**
Vascular – Native

**ENDEMIC TAXON**
Yes

**ENDEMIC GENUS**
No

**ENDEMIC FAMILY**
No

**STRUCTURAL CLASS**
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

**NVS CODE**
HEDARB

**CHROMOSOME NUMBER**
n = 57II, 2n = 116, c.166

**CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**
2012 | Not Threatened

**PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES**
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**
Common small tree. Leaves dark green, glossy, oval, with toothed margins, in pairs on short stalks from a flattened part of the dark twigs. Flowers simple, green, around 1cm wide, arranged in small sprays. Fruit orange, oval, about 1cm long.

**DISTRIBUTION**
Endemic. Three Kings, North and South Islands. In the South island uncommon in the east south of Kaikoura reaching its southern limit on that coastline on Banks Peninsula, it is more ranging in the west reaching northern Fiordland at least.

**HABITAT**
A common forest tree of coastal and lowland forest, extending into montane areas in the warmer parts of the North Island.
FEATURES
Tree up to 12 m. tall; trunk up to 0.5m dbh, clear of branches for first few metres, ; bark dark grey to brown-grey, firm (not flaking) finely tessellated. Branches numerous, upright to spreading; branchlets finely brown-pubescent at tips. Leaves coriaceous, glabrous except for midrib and main veins and petioles, adaxially dark green, glossy or glaucous, abaxially similar but paler and dull; petioles 10-15-20(-35) mm long; lamina 40-120(-180) × 25-30(-50-60) mm, elliptic-obovate, oblanceolate to lanceolate, cuneately narrowed to base, obtuse to subacute or acute, margins distantly serrate (with occasional subentire leaves) or toothed. Inflorescence a branched raceme; peduncles and pedicels slender, pubescent. Male with perianth c.10 mm diameter, pubescent, stamens numerous, anthers sessile. Female with perianth c.6 mm diameter; carpels up to 20. Drupe 1-seeded, ovoid, 10-15(-16) mm long, red or orange-red up to 10 per branch. Endocarp 9-14 mm long, elliptic to obovate, rarely circular, brown to grey-brown, surface ± smooth, usually with a few irregular bumps and/or longitudinal ridges. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

SIMILAR TAXA
None. Plants from the Three Kings (Manawa Tawhi (Great) Island) and the Poor Knights are notable for their very large broad-elliptic to broad-obovate, distantly bluntly toothed leaves (see comments by Allan 1961). However, de Lange & Cameron (1999) noted that not all Hedycarya on the Poor Knights share these characteristics and that such large-leaved plants grade into "typical" H. arborea on the other Hauraki Gulf Islands. The situation seems similar to that observed for large-leaved forms of tawa (Beilschmiedia tawa) that some authors have segregated as a distinct species, B. tawaroa (see Wright 1984). Like B. tawaroa, these larger, broader leaved island forms of Hedycarya arborea, exhibit no other morphological or cytological distinctions (see de Lange & Murray 2002). Nevertheless they would repay further study.

FLOWERING
December - February

FLOWER COLOURS
Cream, White

FRUITING
March - June

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed. A quick growing tree ideal for the warmer parts of the North Island (though once established it will tolerate a reasonable amount of cold). The fruit is avidly sought after by kereru (Hemiphaga novaezelandiae).

ETYMOLOGY
hedycarya: Sweet-nutted
arborea: From the Latin arbor ‘tree’, meaning tree-like

ATTRIBUTION
REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

CITATION
Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Hedycarya arborea Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hedycarya-arborea/ (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION