

# Hoheria populnea

## COMMON NAME

Lacebark, houhere, ribbonwood

## SYNONYMS

*Hoheria sinclairii* Hook.f., *H. populnea* subsp. *vulgaris* Kirk var. *vulgaris*, *H. populnea* subsp. *vulgaris* var. *sinclairii* (Hook.f.) Kirk, *H. populnea* var. *crataegifolia* Hook.f. (pro parte)

## FAMILY

Malvaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Hoheria populnea* A.Cunn.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

HOHPOP

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Soft-wooded tree with a grey trunk bearing leathery toothed leaves and large white flowers that develop into a winged dry fruit inhabiting the northern North Island. Leaves 7-14cm long by 4-6cm wide, widest at base. Juvenile plants with zigzagging branches bearing leaves only 1-3cm long with deep gaps between teeth.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island only from North Cape (Pararaki Stream) south to the northern Waikato and Coromandel. However widely planted and often found naturalising throughout the southern North Island, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane usually in Kauri (*Agathis australis*) forest but also in successional forest associated with kauri. Also common in pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*) dominated coastal forest.



*Hoheria populnea*. Photographer: Peter de Lange



*Hoheria populnea*. Photographer: Peter de Lange

## FEATURES

Small upright to often spreading tree up to 8 m tall (rarely more); bark of mature trunk and branches dark grey-brown that of younger growth dark red-brown or maroon, branches and branchlets ascending, in some forms pendulous, pliant, slender, often deeply grooved, ± glabrescent, indumentum comprised of short stellate hairs, on mature parts sparse, on young parts and inflorescence sparse to dense. Juvenile foliage identical or nearly so to adult. Leaves subcoriaceous to coriaceous glossy, adaxially dark-green to yellow-green, sometimes with veins more darkly pigmented, abaxially often maroon or purple with darker coloured veins, sometimes green or glaucescent; petioles slender, pliant up to 10 mm long; lamina (5-)10(-30) mm long, broad-ovate to deltoid to suborbicular in outline, margins serrate, usually deeply so, coarsely lobed. Adult leaves similar, on petioles up to 20 mm long; lamina (50-)7(-180) mm × (30-)40(-60) mm, broad-ovate to ovate-lanceolate to elliptic, apex acuminate or acute, obtuse or rounded, base rounded to truncate (rarely subcordate); margins deeply, coarsely, sometimes doubly, serrate-dentate, teeth usually well spaced. Flowers 25-30 mm diameter, both solitary and in (2-)5-10-flowered cymose clusters on same plant; pedicels 8-10(-12) mm long; calyx campanulate, 5-6 mm long, teeth broadly to narrowly triangular; petals 10-12 mm long, white, obliquely oblong, often notched.; stigmas capitate. Mature carpels 5(-6), compressed. Mericarp winged, main body 4.5-6.5 mm long, brown; wing 3.0-8.5 mm long, slightly curved outwards, orange yellow, finely and sparsely covered with stellate hairs. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Hoheria equitum* endemic to the Poor Knights and Hen & Chicken Islands is similar. It differs by having distinctly coriaceous, uniformly light green, finely serrated to sub-entire leaves, and smaller flowers which tend to be obscured by the foliage. *Hoheria sexstylosa* is also often confused with *H. populnea*, from which it differs by its distinctive filiraculate juvenile growth habit, pendulous branches, and narrower, more finely serrated leaves. The flowers are also somewhat smaller but tend to have 6 rather than 5 carpels.

## FLOWERING

January - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

April - June

## LIFE CYCLE

Winged mericarps are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed, and often seedlings can be found in the vicinity of garden plants. Specimens tend to be short-lived and they often suffer from *Hoheria* Die back - a syndrome which kills portions of the tree and has no cure. An excellent fast-growing tree suitable as a wind break and as temporary shelter (because it is so short-lived). Numerous horticultural selections and cultivars are known

## ETYMOLOGY

**hoheria**: Latin version of the Maori name houhere which refers to *H. populnea* and *H. glabrata*.

**populnea**: Poplar-like

## WHERE TO BUY

Commonly sold at most garden centres. A form with purple stamens is known as cv. *Osbournei*, and comes originally from Great Barrier Island.

## NOTES ON HYBRIDISATION

Hybridizes in the northern Waikato and Auckland areas where it naturally meets with *H. sexstylosa*. *Hoheria populnea* is widely planted, often inappropriately as part of restoration plantings, and freely naturalizes from these. In cultivation this species hybridizes readily with *H. angustifolia*, *H. equitum*, *H. ovata* and *H. sexstylosa*. *Hoheria populnea* is very variable species with well marked, and geographically defined races. This variation needs critical study. Indeed the genus as a whole is in serious need to a modern systematic revision.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 9 April 2011. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

Moorfield, J. C. (2005). Te aka : Maori-English, English-Maori dictionary and index. Pearson Longman: Auckland, N.Z.

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 11: 285-309

## CITATION

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/hoheria-populnea/>