

Hoheria sexstylosa

COMMON NAME

Houhere, lacebark

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Malvaceae

AUTHORITY

Hoheria sexstylosa Colenso

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Dicotyledonous Trees & Shrubs

NVS CODE

HOHSEX

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 central New Zealand. Leaves 5–15cm long by 1–5cm wide, widest near middle. Juvenile plants with tangled branches bearing rounded leaves only 1–3cm long and with 3–5 blunt teeth.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island from the northern Waikato and Coromandel Peninsula south to the south Wellington Coast and Wairarapa. South Island rather local and wild populations are now hard to recognise from naturalised ones. Those from North West Nelson, inland Marlborough and Banks Peninsula are probably natural. Some botanists regard all South Island occurrences of *H. sexstylosa* as naturalised but this seems unlikely. *Hoheria sexstylosa* currently includes plants that AP Druce referred to as *Hoheria* 'Tararua'.

HABITAT

Coastal, lowland to montane riparian forest.



A plant in cultivation. Feb 1986. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Coromandel, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

FEATURES

Heteroblastic, much-branched tree up to 18 m tall; bark of mature trunk and branches dark grey-brown that of younger growth dark red brown branches and branchlets rather slender, ascending often with branchlet apices pendulous; indumentum on mature parts, sparse. comprised of short stellate hairs; indumentum of younger parts and inflorescences rather denser, comprised of copious stellate hairs. Juvenile and sub-adult plants usually filiramulate, sub-divaricate to ± fully divaricate (such growth sometimes persisting as reversion shoots on the damaged trunk of mature trees); leaves rather distant, on very slender, brittle petioles (4.8)-5.0(-8.0) mm long; lamina (10-)15(-30) × (10-)15(-25) mm, adaxially dark green to grey-green, dull or glossy, adaxially paler and dull, broad-ovate to suborbicular, base cuneately narrowed, margins irregularly and deeply 3-5-lobed or coarsely incised, teeth dentate; lamina surfaces usually finely covered in caducous stellate hairs. Adult leaves on slender, pliant petioles 5-10(-20) mm long; lamina (50-)150 × (10-)50(-60) mm, adaxially dark green to grey-green, dull or glossy, adaxially paler and dull, lanceolate to ovate-lanceolate, apices mostly acuminate, sometimes obtuse to broadly rounded, base cuneately narrowed; lamina surfaces ± glabrous, sometimes sparsely covered in reddish to grey caducous stellate hairs (especially abaxially on and near midrib). Flowers 18-20(-25) mm diameter, in 2-5-flowered cymose fascicles or solitary, on slender pedicels 20-30 mm long. Calyx campanulate, (4.5-)6.0(-8.0) mm long, teeth narrowly triangular, indumentum usually dense, hairs stellate; petals 10-15 mm long, white, obliquely oblong, notched.; styles (5)-6-7, stigmas capitate; anthers white. Carpels (5-)6(-7) compressed. Mericarp winged, main body 4.5-6.5 mm long, brown; wing 3.2-8.0 mm long, abruptly curved outwards, orange yellow, finely and sparsely covered with stellate hairs.

SIMILAR TAXA

Hoheria populnea could be confused with *H. sexstylosa*. However, *Hoheria populnea* has a more northerly distribution, though the ranges of *H. sexstylosa* and *H. populnea* overlap in the northern Waikato and western Auckland. *Hoheria sexstylosa* differs from *H. populnea* by its heteroblastic growth habit, with the juveniles filiramulate, sub-divaricate, and by the adults whose leaves tend to be narrower, grey-green, with more finely toothed margins with the teeth less coarse and more closely spaced. *Hoheria sexstylosa* tends to form taller trees, with distinctly pendulous branches. The flowers, as the species epithet implies usually have 6 carpels. In the southern part of its range *Hoheria sexstylosa* usually grows with *H. angustifolia*, with which it frequently hybridizes (the type of *Hoheria populnea* var. *lanceolata* is based on just such a hybrid). *Hoheria angustifolia* is easily distinguished from *H. sexstylosa* by its distinct filiramulate-divaricate, long persistent juvenile (which often appears as reversion shoots on the damaged trunks of mature trees, by the mature leaves which are much narrowed and more deeply toothed, and by the flowers which have 5 carpels rather the usual six seen in *H. sexstylosa*. Where hybridism between both these species is prolific these distinctions can become blurred (see *H. angustifolia*). *Hoheria* is a genus in dire need of a modern systematic revision.

FLOWERING

February - May

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

April - August

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed, Less adaptable than *H. populnea* and prefers a damp soil in a sheltered site (at least until it becomes established). The juvenile foliage is unusual and very different from the adult form

ETYMOLOGY

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

sexstylosa: Six styles

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally sold by garden centres and commonly available from specialist native plant nurseries

NOTES

Hoheria populnea var. *lanceolata* Hook.f. is based on a hybrid between *H. sexstylosa* and *H. angustifolia* Raoul. Nevertheless this hybrid has frequently and incorrectly been used by some New Zealand botanists as an alternative name for *H. sexstylosa*.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 9 April 2011. Description based on herbarium specimens and live plants grown by P.J. de Lange (9 April 2011) supplemented by information obtained from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2011).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

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

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

CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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