Ixerba brexioides

**COMMON NAME**
tawari, whakou (flowers)

**SYNONYMS**
None

**FAMILY**
Strasburgeriaceae

**AUTHORITY**
Ixerba brexioides A.Cunn.

**FLORA CATEGORY**
Vascular – Native

**ENDEMIC TAXON**
Yes

**ENDEMIC GENUS**
Yes

**ENDEMIC FAMILY**
Yes

**STRUCTURAL CLASS**
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

**NVS CODE**
IXEBRE

**CHROMOSOME NUMBER**
2n = 50

**CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**
2012 | Not Threatened

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

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**
Bushy tree bearing narrow thick serrated dark green leaves and clusters of white flowers with a prominent green centre inhabiting the upper North Island. Leaves 6-16cm long by 1-4cm wide. Flowers 2.5-3.5cm wide. Fruit a green capsule, splits to reveal the black seeds on a fleshy orange and white base.

**DISTRIBUTION**
Endemic. New Zealand, North Island (widespread from about Kaitaia south to Waitomo, Paeroa Range and Te Urewera).

**HABITAT**
Often but not exclusively an associate of kauri (Agathis australis) forest. Also common in montane cloud forest. Prefers shaded or sheltered sites, often near streams and in permanently damp ground. Can be locally abundant in some areas but otherwise it is rather sporadic in its occurrences,
FEATURES
Small tree up to 10 m tall with spreading crown. Trunk 0.2-0.4 m diam., bark dark brown to grey-brown. Branchlets, leaves and inflorescences clade in fine pubescence when young. Petioles, stout, fleshy, 20 mm long. Leaves yellow-green to dark-green above, paler beneath, somewhat fleshy, distinctly leathery, 60-160 x 10-40 mm, lanceolate to elliptic or oblanceolate, apex acute to subacute, margins bluntly and coarsely serrated. Apex of each serration surmounted with a small gland. Juvenile leaves often reddish, linear-lanceolate. Inflorescence a terminal subumbellate 5-10-flowered panicle. Flowers 25-35 mm diam, furnished with plenty of nectar. Sepals broad-ovate, downy, 5-6 mm long; petals white, obovate-spathulate, clawed, 15-20 mm long, inserted below a 5-lobed disc; stamens 5 exserted, alternating with disc lobes; style twisted, 5-grooved. Capsule leathery, broadly ovoid, 5-celled, seeds orange, 5 mm long, very glossy.

SIMILAR TAXA
A very distinctive tree easily recognised by the leathery, somewhat fleshy, lanceolate leaves, whose serrations are glandular-tipped, large, showy, white flowers, and distinctive capsules which split to reveal rather large glossy black seeds.

FLOWERING
(September-) October-November (-December)

FLOWER COLOURS
White

FRUITING
November - January (-March)

LIFE CYCLE
Arrilate seeds are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Difficult to grow. It has been suggested that the species is mycorrhizal, and there is some evidence that if planted in association with Griselinia littoralis, Ixerba grows very easily.

ETYMOLOGY
ixerba: An anagram of brexia
brexioides: Like a Brexia, a South African shrub

TAXONOMIC NOTES
Ixerba has been placed in a range of families. Allan (1961) placed it in the Escallionaceae, however this placement was at best doubtful, and so it was placed in 2008 into its own family the monogeneric Ixerbaceae. It was then, for a very short time New Zealand's only endemic vascular plant family. However, in 2009 the Ixerbaceae was merged with the New Caledonian Strasburgeriaceae (APG III 2009).

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (28 July 2005). Description based on Allan (1961), fresh material and herbarium specimens.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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