

Notelaea montana

COMMON NAMES

narrow-leaved maire

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Tree bearing pairs of dark green very narrow smooth leaves that are pale green underneath. Leaves 4-7cm long by 0.5cm wide. Fruit red, 6-9mm long, containing a single seed.

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Gynodioecious(?) canopy tree up to 15 m tall, usually forming a domed canopy; trunk up to c.0.6 m diameter; occasional bearing 2 or more trunks from base these slender, straight, somewhat spreading, bark firm (not flaking), grey-brown to red-brown, tessellated. branches slender, upright to spreading; branchlets glabrous; branchlets glabrescent (with young growth initially minutely weakly pubescent). Leaves glabrous, coriaceous, dark glossy green above, paler beneath, margins plane (rarely weakly undulating), entire with midrib slightly raised above and below (side veins not evident when leaf fresh); borne on flexible, slender petioles 2-3(-5) mm long; lamina of juveniles 50-100 × 4-10 mm, narrowly linear, linear to linear-lanceolate, apex acute (rarely obtuse); adult lamina 40-80(-100) × 4-8 mm, narrow-linear to very narrowly-lanceolate, apex acute or, rarely, obtuse, base cuneately narrowed or attenuate. Inflorescence a 5-10-flowered raceme, rhachis and pedicels slender, mostly glabrous (sometimes sparsely, minutely puberulent). Male flowers with shallowly lobed calyx, lobes ovate-triangular, acute, anthers 2, exserted, ovary usually rudimentary (rarely functional). Female flowers similar but with anthers rudimentary (sometimes functional). Drupe 6-14 mm long, narrowly ovoid, flesh pinkish red, red or orange; endocarp 6.5-12.0 × 3.0-4.5 mm, dull, pale orange-yellow, elliptic. Seed purple-brown. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

SIMILAR TAXA

Mature trees are easily distinguished from the other three species of maire (*Notelaea*) by their distinctive linear, linear-lanceolate leaves, and much smaller fruits (6-14 mm in *N. montana*, 10-18 mm in *N. apetala*, 15-20 mm in *N. cunninghamii* and 10-18 mm in *N. neolanceolata*)

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands from near Kaitaia south to the Waimea Plain Nelson. Scarce in the southern North Island (where it is most common in the eastern Wairarapa) and very uncommon in the South Island).



Coromandel. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Aorangi Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 07/02/2009, Licence: CC BY.

HABITAT

Widespread though rarely abundant in coastal to montane forest. Often found on steep hill slopes and ridge lines but also can be locally common in riparian forest especially on the margins of forest flats and tomo or dolines in karst country. Narrow-leaved maire is unusually common on the sand country of the Pouto Peninsula where it can at times dominate local coastal forest (e.g., Tapu Bush - see Wright and Young 1991).

GENUS

Notelaea

FAMILY

Oleaceae

AUTHORITY

Notelaea montana (Hook.f.) Hong-Wa & Besnard

SYNONYMS

Olea montana Hook.f., Gymnelaea montana (Hook.f.) L.A.S.Johnson; Nestegis montana (Hook.f.) L.A.S.Johnson

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November - January

FRUITING

December - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. An attractive small tree that makes an excellent specimen tree for a large garden or street avenue. Once established Notelaea montana is extremely tolerant of drought and frost. However, plants do best when planted in semi-shade in a position where they can grow into the light but they are remarkably tolerant of being planted into full sun. This tree deserves to be grown more widely than it is. However, it is rarely available from plant nurseries, even those that specialize in native plants.

ETYMOLOGY

montana: From the Latin mons 'mountain', meaning growing on mountains

NVS CODE

NESMON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 46

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, PF, RF Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the

["Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland"](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

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.

Wright, A.E.; Young, M.E. 1991. Vascular plants of Tapu Bush, North Kaipara Harbour. Auckland Botanical Society Journal 46 (2): 70-72

ATTRIBUTION

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

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/notelaea-montana/>

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