

Notelaea neolanceolata

COMMON NAMES

white 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 narrow smooth leaves that are pale green underneath. Leaves 5-9cm long by 1-2.5cm wide. Fruit red, 8-11mm long, containing a single seed.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout gynodioecious spreading tree up to 20 m tall usually forming a domed canopy; trunk up to c. 1 m diameter; often with several arising from base, these usually straight to somewhat arching, bark firm (not flaking), grey-brown to dark brown, tessellated. Branches slender, upright to spreading; branchlets glabrescent. Leaves glabrous, coriaceous, dark green above and $\pm$ glossy, paler beneath, margins plane (rarely weakly undulating), entire with weakly impressed to slightly raised midrib (side veins not evident when leaf fresh); borne on flexible but stout petioles 5-10 mm long; lamina of juveniles 100-400 $\times$ 4-10 mm, narrowly linear to linear, apex acute sometimes acuminate; adults lamina 40-80(-100) $\times$ 10-30 mm, narrow-ovate, ovate-lanceolate to narrow-elliptic, apex acute to subacuminate, base cuneately narrowed or attenuate; midrib $\pm$ raised to weakly impressed above, somewhat prominent below. Inflorescence a 5-10(-14)-flowered raceme, 10-20 mm long; rhachis and pedicels glabrous or minutely puberulent. Male flowers with 2(-4) exerted anthers > 2 mm long, ovary usually rudimentary (occasionally functional); female flowers with large 2-lobed stigma and more deeply lobed calyx, anthers if present rudimentary. Drupe 10-18 mm long, oblong-ovoid to ovoid, flesh pink, red, pinkish-red or orange; endocarp 6.0-15 $\times$ 3.5-9.5 mm, dull, pale orange-yellow, oblong, sometimes ovate or narrowly oblong-elliptic. Seed purple-brown. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).



Close up of fruits, Te Moehau (March).
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Adult foliage, Waitakere Ranges. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 16/09/2006, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Notelaea apetala* by its linear juvenile leaves, and much narrower adult leaves. From *Notelaea cunninghamii* it differs by the non-bullate leaves whose side-veins are not conspicuous, and whose midrib is scarcely impressed above. Distinguishing juvenile *Nestegis lanceolata* from *N. montana* is extremely difficult but the leaves of the adults serve to separate them, those of *N. montana* are 35-90 × 6-9 mm, linear; those of *N. neolanceolata* 40-80(-100) × 10-30 mm. The drupes of *N. montana* are up to 12 mm long those of *N. neolanceolata* 18mm long. Similarly juvenile *N. cunninghamii* and *N. neolanceolata* can look very similar, however, the upper leaf surface of *N. cunninghamii* juveniles is dull while those of *N. neolanceolata* are glossy. The adult branchlets of *Notelaea neolanceolata* tend to be glabrous or minutely and sparsely puberulent whilst those of *N. cunninghamii* are distinctly pubescent.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands. Widespread and common in the North Island except in the southern part of range (Horowhenua, southern Wairarapa and Wellington areas). Very uncommon in the South Island where it is locally present in the Marlborough Sounds, reaching its southern limit along the Tuamarina River.

HABITAT

Widespread in coastal to montane forest. Commonly found on steep hill slopes and ridge lines but also can be locally common in riparian forest. As a rule *Notelaea neolanceolata* tends to avoid frost-prone habitats and sites that frequently flood. In the northern part of its range it is often found with narrow-leaved maire (*N. montana*) and black maire (*N. cunninghamii*). In some parts of eastern Northland it is also found in coastal forest with *Notelaea apetala*.

GENUS

Notelaea

FAMILY

Oleaceae

AUTHORITY

Notelaea neolanceolata Hong-Wa & Besnard

SYNONYMS

Olea lanceolata Hook.f.; *Gymnelaea lanceolata* (Hook.f.) L.A.S.Johnson; *Notelaea lanceolata* (Hook.f.) Hong-Wa & Besnard nom. illeg.; *Nestegis lanceolata* (Hook.f.) L.A.S.Johnson

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November - January

FRUITING

December - February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Difficult from cuttings. White maire deserves to be more widely grown as it makes an excellent specimen or street tree and once established is remarkably drought tolerant. The fruit is avidly eaten by many birds especially kereru (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*).

NVS CODE

NESLAN

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 Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT 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.

ATTRIBUTION

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

Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Notelaea neolanceolata* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/notelaea-neolanceolata/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

25 May 2026