

Phyllocladus trichomanoides

COMMON NAMES

tānekaha, celery pine

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Gymnosperms

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Monoecious tree up to 25 m, trunk up to 1 m diameter; phylloclades alternate, pinnately arranged on whorled rhachides up to 300 mm long. **Leaves** of juveniles up to 20 mm long, narrow-linear, deciduous; of adults much smaller. **Phylloclades** 10–15 per rhachis, irregularly and broadly rhomboid, flabellately lobed, cuneate at base; lobes obtuse to truncate, margins minutely crenulate; leaf-denticles small, subulate, 1.5–3.0 mm long, up to 1.5 mm wide. **Male strobili** terminal in clusters of 5–10, pedicels 3–10 mm long; staminal portion c. 10 mm long, apiculus small, triquetrous; carpidia rather thick, marginal on reduced final phylloclades up to 30 mm long, in clusters of 6–8; seeds nutlike, exserted beyond white, fleshy, irregularly crenulate cupule, c. 3 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Tānekaha is distinguished from mountain toatoa (*Phyllocladus alpinus*) by the phylloclades which are pinnately arranged on rhachis and from toatoa (*P. toatoa*) by the seeds which arranged singly on the margins of phylloclades.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (widespread from Te Pahi to about the northern Manawatū, after which it is scarce) and South Island (confined to the Marlborough Sounds, northern Richmond Range and North-west Nelson from Puponga south to about Kahurangi Light and across to Abel Tasman National Park).

HABITAT

Found from sea level to c.1000 m a.s.l. tānekaha is a common tree in northern New Zealand where it is often found growing in association with kauri (*Agathis australis*) on ridge lines. Tānekaha is also common in secondary regrowth forest overlying poorly draining and/or infertile soils. It can be very common in reverting fire-induced gumland scrub. In the central North Island tānekaha-dominated forest is locally common overlying ignimbrite rock and this forest type is very much a feature of the northern Taupo - King Country - Atiamuri area where extensive tānekaha-dominated forests are present overlying such high aspect ratio ignimbrites as the Whakamaru Ignimbrite. Further south tānekaha is rarely such a major component of the forest canopy.



Catkins of *Phyllocladus trichomanoides*.
Photographer: Wayne Bennett, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Phylloclades. Tokatoka Hill, Northland.
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/07/2006, Licence: CC BY.

GENUS

Phyllocladus

FAMILY

Phyllocladaceae

AUTHORITY

Phyllocladus trichomanoides D.Don

SYNONYMS

Phyllocladus trichomanoides D.Don var. trichomanoides, Phyllocladus rhomboidalis A.Rich.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

A distinct as yet undescribed species allied to *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* is known from the 120-ha exposure of ultramafic rock at North Cape, Te Pahi. This unnamed species differs from *P. trichomanoides* by its shorter stature and spreading growth habit, longer phyllodes, larger fruits and longer fruiting season. It still awaits formal description. In the past this form had been referred to the hybrid *P. toatoa* × *P. trichomanoides*. However *Phyllocladus toatoa* is not known from Te Pahi and the North Cape tree comes true from seed.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September–December

FRUITING

January–April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Seedlings transplant well and this species is sometimes common in cultivation. It is often grown as a specimen tree in parks and does well in urban areas on street side verges. Once established tānekaha is able to tolerate full light and considerable drought but young plants do better planted in a less exposed site or at least provided with plenty of water during their early stages of establishment.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

phyllocladus: Leaf branch, referring to the leaf-like stems

trichomanoides: Fern-like

NVS CODE

PHYTRI

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 18

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 HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 August 2004. Description adapted from Allan (1961).

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/phylocladus-trichomanoides/>

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