

# Pseudopanax lessonii

## COMMON NAME

Houpara

## SYNONYMS

*Panax lessonii* DC.

## FAMILY

Araliaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Pseudopanax lessonii* (DC.) K.Koch

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

PSELES

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Coastal tree with fleshy hand-shaped leaves

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Three Kings to Poverty Bay and northern Taranaki

## HABITAT

Coastal forest and scrub

## FEATURES

Small tree to 6 m tall; branches stout, with leaves crowded towards tips of branchlets. Leaves alternate, leaflets 3-5, palmate, lateral leaflets smaller; juvenile leaves larger than adult. Petiole to 15 cm long, stout, sheathing stem at base; stipules absent. Leaflets subsessile, terminal leaflet on short petiolule, obovate-cuneate, sinuate-crenate to bluntly serrate in distal half, subacute to obtuse, dark green above, paler beneath, midvein obvious, lateral veins obscure, c. 5-10 x 2-4 cm. Inflorescence a terminal compound umbel; male (staminate) primary rays (branchlets) 4-8 c. 4-5 cm long, flowers racemosely arranged along secondary rays; pistillate (female) primary rays shorter, flowers in irregular umbellules. Petals greenish, acute; anthers on filaments < petals. Ovary 5-loculed, each containing 1 ovule; style branches 5, connate, tips spreading. Fruit fleshy, dark purple, broadly oblong, 7 x 5 mm, style branches retained on an apical disc. 5 Seeds per fruit, narrowly ovate to ovate or oblong, dimpled, 5.5-8.0 mm long.



Motuoruhi, Coromandel, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Motuoruhi, Coromandel, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

### **SIMILAR TAXA**

Vegetatively similar to *Pseudopanax colensoi* which has obviously-toothed leaflets

### **FLOWER COLOURS**

Green

### **ETYMOLOGY**

**pseudopanax**: False cure

### **ATTRIBUTION**

Description adapted from Allan (1961), Eagle (2006) and Webb and Simpson (2001).

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

Allan, H.H. 1961. Flora of NZ, Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington

Eagle, A. 2000. Eagle's complete trees and shrubs of NZ. Te Papa Press, Wellington

Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch.

### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pseudopanax-lessonii/>