

# Dacrydium cupressinum

## COMMON NAMES

rimu, red pine

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Gymnosperms

## FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious conifer 35–(60) m tall. Adult trees with trunk bare of branches for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of length. **Trunk** stout, 1.5–2 m diam., bark dark brown, falling off in large thick flakes. **Wood** dark red. **Branches** in juveniles numerous, slender, branchlets pendulous. **Adult branches** few, spreading, branchlets slender, pendulous. **Leaves** dark green, bronze-green, red-green or orange, imbricate, those of juveniles 4–7–(10) mm, 0.5–1 mm wide, keeled, acute, linear-subulate, subfalcate, decurrent; those of subadults ascending, incurved 4–6 mm, rhomboid; of adults similar but appressed, 2–3 mm., rigid, subacute, trigonous. **Male and female "cones"** first appear on subadults. **Male cones (strobili)** solitary or paired, terminal 5–10 mm., oblong. **Pollen** yellow. **Ovules** solitary, terminal on up-curved branchlets. **Receptacle** a fleshy red or deep-orange cup 1–2 mm long. **Seed** oblong or elliptic-oblong, compressed in section, 3–3.8–(4) mm long, semi-glossy, dark-brown.

## SIMILAR TAXA

A very distinctive species which could not be confused with any other indigenous conifer. The very young juveniles have a superficial similarity to seedlings of silver pine (*Manoao colensoi*) but differ by their much finer, more numerous, dull rather than glossy red-green leaves.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (from North Cape (Oroua) south), South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura. Uncommon in large parts of the eastern South Island. Facultatively extinct on Banks Peninsula, where one natural tree is all that remains.

## HABITAT

Lowland to montane forest—occasionally ascending to subalpine scrub.

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

## THREATS

Not Threatened, although as a forest-type it has been greatly reduced through widespread logging. Very few intact examples of rimu-dominated forest remain in the North Island.

## DETAILED TAXONOMY

## FAMILY

Podocarpaceae



Female cones. Photographer: Department of Conservation, Licence: Public domain.



Fertilised cones. Photographer: Department of Conservation, Licence: Public domain.

## AUTHORITY

*Dacrydium cupressinum* Lamb.

## SYNONYMS

*Thalamia cupressina* Spreng

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Rimu is the type of the genus *Dacrydium*.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## ECOLOGY

## FLOWERING

December–March

## FRUITING

Fruits take a year or more to mature and co-occur with young female cones, they are most frequently seen between February and May.

## LIFE CYCLE

Arillate seeds are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Can be grown from hard-wood cuttings but rather slow to strike.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

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

## OTHER INFORMATION

## CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

The first indigenous beer was brewed using the young tips of rimu (as spruce beer) by Captain Cook at Dusky Sound in 1773 (Kirk 1889).

## CULTIVATION

Commonly cultivated and frequently sold by most commercial nurseries and outlets. A very popular garden tree.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for February 2006](#) for the full story.

## ETYMOLOGY

**dacrydium:** Tear drop

**cupressinum:** Cypress

## NVS CODE

DACCUP

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 20

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened  
2012 | Not Threatened  
2009 | Not Threatened  
2004 | Not Threatened

## REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

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Kirk T. 1889. The Forest Flora of New Zealand. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 345 p.  
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Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

Webb CJ, Simpson MJA. 2001. Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch. 428 p.

### ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 3 February 2006. Description adapted from Allan (1961), Webb & Simpson (2001), fresh material and herbarium specimens.

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### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dacrydium-cupressinum/>

### PDF DATE

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