

WETLAND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

Wetlands have traditionally been drained in New Zealand in favour of land development, but as the importance of these natural wet areas has become more evident, particularly in sustaining native wildlife, they are being progressively reinstated. It can be challenging to plant authentically and with successful varieties. Allow us to introduce a few excellent wetlands choices:

Kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydoides*)



Kahikatea is an upright forest tree. It grows to 5 metres within 10 years, and up to 40 metres, sometimes more. New Zealand's tallest tree, it's found nationwide, and carries khaki-green foliage. It produces small orange to crimson berries which ripen in autumn and attract birds, particularly kereru, bellbirds, wax-eyes, blackbirds and thrushes. Very hardy, this tree loves swampy and riparian (river banks) ground, though it is quite happy in drier spots too. It tolerates frost. Kahikatea yields light, soft, but tough timber and the absence of odour or taste make it ideal for uses with food. Maori also used it for soot as a tattooing pigment. Often dioecious (male and female are separate trees).

Kaikomako (*Pennantia corymbosa*)



Kaikomako is an upright evergreen forest tree with attractive dark green foliage spreading into a dense rounded crown once adult. It grows slowly up to a height of 8-12 metres, and must have moisture. In summer, heavily-scented creamy white flowers appear from November to February, sometimes so thickly they obscure the foliage. Kaikomako is a dioecious tree with females producing smaller flowers than male trees. The fruit ripens from January to May into deep purple to black berries which fruit-eating birds such as bellbirds love. Having a tightly divaricated (branches of wide angles and intertangled) juvenile form, Kaikomako is found all over New Zealand. It produces good, hard wood used for fire-making, just as early Maori used it, attaching to it the myth of Hine-kaikomako, the fire conserver.

Pukatea (*Laurelia novae-zealandiae*)



Pukatea is a tall, straight, specimen tree with small to medium size, lighter green, glossy, aromatic (when crushed) leaves. It grows to a height of 3 metres in 10 years, up to a maximum of 35 metres, and the crown is characteristically divided into many umbrella-like heads. Often buttressed, it enjoys swampy soils like Kahikatea, (and also drier spots) but is less frost tolerant and does not thrive in drought. Found from Nelson, Marlborough, through to the Far North, Pukatea also makes good hedging. It yields quality timber with good keeping qualities. Various parts of this dioecious tree were used medicinally by Maori.

Puriri (*Vitex lucens*)



Puriri is a lavish specimen spreading tree with growth to 5 metres in height within 10 years, up to a maximum of 20 metres. It tolerates wind, and swampy ground, but will suffer in heavy frost. This deep green, glossy-leaved favourite is a hardy tree found from Taupo to the Far North in coastal areas. It produces, virtually continually, pink flowers which yield small, bright red berries bringing birds. A valuable hardwood timber, known as iron-tree for its reputation in blunting axes, Maori used Puriri medicinally, and for a range of implements and weapons.

Putaputaweta (*Carpodetus serratus*)



Putaputaweta is an attractive upright specimen with a crown of spreading branches. A smaller tree, it produces steady growth to 3 metres within 10 years, up to a maximum of 10 metres. Mainly riparian, this tree tolerates both sun and frost but prefers moist ground. Common all over the country, Putaputaweta develops lateral branches like Beech. It has small marbled leaves which have earned it the nickname of Marble-Leaf. Mildly divaricated when young, masses of small white flowers are produced from November to March, giving the tree a Hawthorn-like look. The flowers develop into small black fruit which may take a year to mature. Difficult, sappy, timber.

In wetter environments the immediate BIG-TREE effect offers the certainty that your plantings will produce a desired look without having to wait for many years of growth and potential losses. A 5-10 year old native environment already producing shade and shelter can be in place very quickly with takana's BIG-TREE stage natives. They're grown specifically for insertion into environments to create natural, established, and beautiful effects. Come and see us. We're always up for the opportunity to share our knowledge and help you get what will best work for your application. Visit us at 102 Omaha Flats Road, Matakana, or call us on **0800 TAKANA**. or email: don@takana.co.nz