A planter's handbook for

Northland natives

including special plants for wetlands, coast and bird food





Tiakina nga manu, ka ora te ngahere. Ka ora te ngahere, ka ora nga manu.

Look after the birds and the forest flourishes. If the forest flourishes, the birds flourish.



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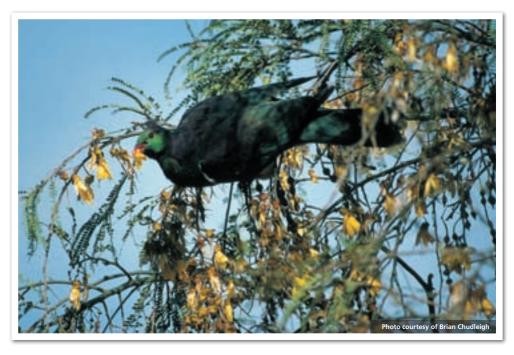
Introduction

This handbook has been published to help readers decide which native plants to use on their land. The book does not include every native plant but provides a wide range that are readily available in local nurseries.

Charts on each page show whether a plant provides food for birds, what its final height may be and how quickly it grows. The book also includes plants that will handle harsh coastal environments, windy and/or dry locations and frosts, as well as those plants that tolerate shade or a wetter habitat.

To attract tui, kukupa (native wood pigeon) and other birds, the two calendars can help in choosing which trees you should plant to ensure a year-round berry and nectar supply. Basic information on site preparation, care after planting and weed and pest control is also included.

Remember, more detailed information on plant species, planting, weed and pest control is available from the Northland Regional Council and the Department of Conservation.



Above: Although primarily a fruit eater the kukupa will sometimes eat the flowers and new shoots of the kowhai, Sophora microphylla and some other trees, when berries are scarce.

Front cover: Tui in a pohutukawa at Waitangi Golf Club. Photo courtesy of Darren Markin.

Plants to 6 metres Botanical name Common name		What can the plant tolerate					Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Alseuosmia macrophylla	karapapa	3011	M	vviiiu	TIUSE	2	• •	(кикира)	Haruy	wetiands	med	1.5
Clianthus puniceus	kakabeak	•	L			3	•				fast	2
Cordyline obtecta	3 Kings cabbage tree	•		•		1	•	•	•		med	4
Coprosma propinqua						2	•			•	med	6
Corokia buddleioides	korokia		L			1	•		•		med	3
Geniostoma ligustrofolium	hangehange	•	М			2			•		med	3
Hebe species	hebe	•		•		2			•	•	fast	1-7
Leptospermum scoparium	manuka	•		•	•	1			•	•	fast	4
Lophomyrtus bullata	ramarama	•		•		2	•				med	6
Myrsine australis	mapou	•		•	•	2	•		•		slow	6
Myrsine divaricata	weeping mapou		L			1				•	slow	4
Olearia furfuracea	akepiro	•	L			1			•		med	5
Phormium tenax	flax	•		•	•	1	•		•	•	med	3
Pseudopanax lessonii	houpara	•		•		2			•		med	6
Solanum aviculare	poroporo	•	М			2	•	•			fast	2.5
Tecomanthe speciosa	tecomanthe					1	•				fast	vine



Hebe brevifolia is one of about 16 hebes native to Northland. They can provide a variety of different coloured flowers and are suited to Northland conditions.

Inset: Silvereyes are among many birds that feed off flax flowers.

Plants to 6-8 metres Botanical name Common name		w	hat car	n the p	lant to	lerate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Aristotelia serrata	wineberry		L	•	•	3	•	•			fast	6
Brachyglottis repanda	rangiora					1				•	med	6
Coprosma repens	taupata	•		•		2	•			•	fast	8
Coprosma robusta	karamu					2	•		•	•	fast	6
Dodonaea viscosa	akeake	•		•		1			•		fast	6
Entelea arborescens	whau		L			1			•		med	6
Griselinia littoralis	broadleaf	•		•		2	•	•	•		slow	8
Griselinia lucida	puka	•		•		2	•	•	•		slow	7
Macropiper excelsum	kawakawa		М			2	•	•			med	6
Melicope simplex	poataniwha		L		•	1				•	slow	8
Meryta sinclairii	puka	•		•		2		•	•		med	8
Olearia rani	heketara		L			1				•	med	7
Pittosporum umbellatum	haekaro	•		•		2			•		fast	7
Pseudopanax arboreus	five finger	•		•		3	•		•		fast	8
Pseudowintera axillaris	horopito			•	•	1					med	8
Schefflera digitata	pate	•				3	•	•			med	8



Fast growing and hardy, the five finger species also provide food for tui, bellbirds and silvereye. Inset: Karamu, **Coprosma robusta**, berries are a favourite food for many smaller birds.

Plants to 9-12 metres Botanical name Common name		What can the plant tolerate					Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry	Shade: light med			Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times	Food for: bellbird tui	Food for:	Coast salt	Damp margins	Growth	Final height
- Dotanical Hame	Common name	soil	heavy	Wind	Frost	3-Often	silvereye	(kukupa)	hardy	wetlands	rate	metres
Ackama rosifolia	makamaka				•	2					med	12
Alectryon excelsus	titoki				•	2		•		•	slow	10
Carpodetus serratus	putaputaweta		L	•	•	2	•	•		•	med	10
Coprosma macrocarpa	karamu	•		•		2			•		med	10
Fuchsia excorticata	kotukutuku			•	•	3	•	•			med	12
Hedycarya arborea	pigeonwood			•		2		•			med	12
Hoheria populnea	lacebark	•		•	•	2			•	•	fast	10
Melicytus ramiflorus	mahoe	•		•	•	3	•	•	•	•	fast	10
Myoporum laetum	ngaio	•	L	•	•	1			•		med	10
Pittosporum crassifolium	karo	•		•		1	•		•		fast	9
Pittosporum eugenioides	tarata, lemonwood			•	•	2	•			•	fast	9
Pittosporum tenuifolium	kohuhu		М		•	2	•			•	fast	9
Rhopalostylis sapida	nikau	•		•		2		•	•		slow	10
Sophora microphylla	kowhai	•	L	•	•	2	•	•	•	•	med	10
Streblus heterophyllus	small leaved milk tree		L	•	•	2		•		•	slow	12



Lemonwood (or tarata), **Pittosporum eugenioides**, is quick to establish and can create an effective hedge. Plant eco-sourced trees that will be suited to your local conditions. Inset left: The purple fruit of mahoe, **Melicytus ramiflorus**. Inset right: Titoki, **Alectryon exelsus**, berries.

Plants to 13-20 metres Botanical name Common name		w	hat ca	n the p	lant to	lerate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Cordyline australis	cabbage tree	•	L	•	•	2	Silvereye	•	•	• Wetlands	med	20
Corynocarpus laevigatus	karaka	•	L	•		2		•	•		med	15
Dysoxylum spectabile	kohekohe		М	•		3		•			med	13
Elaeocarpus dentatus	hinau		L	•		2		•			slow	18
Elaeocarpus hookerianus	pokaka			•		2		•		•	slow	12
Kunzea ericoides	kanuka	•		•	•	1			•		fast	15
Metrosideros excelsa	pohutukawa	•		•		3	•		•		slow	20
Nestegis sp.	maire			•	•	2		•			med	20
Plagianthus regius	ribbonwood		М	•	•	1			•	•	fast	17
Planchonella costata	tawapou	•		•		2		•	•		med	15
Pseudopanax crassifolius	lancewood		L	•	•	2	•	•			med	15
Syzygium maire	maire tawake				•	2		•		•	slow	15
Weinmannia silvicola	towai		L	•		3				•	med	15



Karaka, **Corynocarpus laevigatus**, fruit are an important part of the kukupa's summer diet. Inset: One of nature's nursery crops kanuka, **Kunzea ericoides**, in full flower.

Plants over 20 metres Botanical name Common name		w	hat car	the p	lant to	lerate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Agathis australis	kauri	•	neavy	•	•	1	Silvereye	(какара)	nardy	wetianus	slow	60
Beilschmiedia tarairi	taraire			•		2		•	•		med	20
Beilschmiedia tawa	tawa			•	•	2		•			med	24
Dacrycarpus dacrydioides	kahikatea				•	2	•	•		•	med	60
Dacrydium cupressinum	rimu			•	•	2	•	•	•	•	slow	25
Knightia excelsa	rewarewa	•		•	•	2	•				med	30
Laurelia novae-zelandiae	pukatea		М		•	2				•	slow	30
Libocedrus plumosa	kawaka	•		•		2			•		med	25
Metrosideros robusta	rata			•	•	3	•				slow	25
Podocarpus totara	totara		L	•	•	3	•				fast	30
Prumnopitys ferruginea	miro		L		•	2		•			med	25
Prumnopitys taxifolia	matai		L	•	•	2		•		•	med	25
Vitex lucens	puriri	•		•		2	•	•	•		med	20



The foliage and flowers of the taraire, **Beilschmiedia tarairi**, provide important food for kukupa. Inset: Rata flowers.

Grasses-Rushes-Sedges Botanical name Common name		w	hat car	n the p	lant to	lerate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Apodasmia similis	oioi			•	•	1			•	•	med	1.5
Austrostipa stipoides	needlegrass	•		•		1			•		med	0.45
Baumea articulata	jointed twig sedge				•	1				•	med	1.8
Carex comans	longwood tussock		L		•	1				•	fast	0.25
Carex pumila	sand sedge			•		1			•		fast	0.4
Carex secta	pukio			•	•	1				•	med	1.0
Chionochloa bromoides	coastal tussock	•		•		1			•		med	0.45
Cortaderia fulvida	toetoe			•	•	1				•	med	1.5
Cortaderia splendens	coastal toetoe	•		•	•	1			•		med	3.0
Cyperus ustulatus	umbrella sedge			•	•	1				•	med	1.0
Ficinia nodosa	knobby club rush	•		•		1			•		med	0.5
Gahnia xanthocarpa	tupari maunga		М	•		1				•	med	3.5
Uncinia uncinata	hook sedge	•	М	•		1			•	•	med	0.45



Native grasses, rushes and sedges: A: Coastal tussock, **Chionochloa bromoides B**: Needle grass, **Austrostipa stipoides**C: Rengarenga, **Arthropodium cirratum D**: Coastal astelia, **Astelia banksii**

Ground covers Botanical name Common name		W	hat car	n the p	lant to	lerate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Arthropodium cirratum	rengarenga	•	L	•		2	,		•		fast	0.5
Astelia banksii	coastal astelia	•	L	•		2	•		•		med	1.5
Calystegia soldanella	shore bindweed	•		•		1			•		med	0.5
Carex species	sedges	•	L		•	1			•	•	fast	0.3-1.5
Coprosma acerosa	sand coprosma	•		•	•	2	•		•		slow	2.0
Dianella nigra	turutu		М			1	•				fast	0.5
Elatostema rugosum	parataniwha		Н			1				•	fast	1.5
Fuchsia procumbens	creeping fuschia		М			2			•	•	fast	0.5
Hibiscus diversifolius	hibiscus	•		•		1			•		med	1.0
Libertia ixioides	mikiokio	•	L		•	1					med	0.5
Lobelia angulata	panakenake		L			1	•			•	fast	0.2
Mazus novaezeelandiae	mazus		М			1					slow	0.1
Mazus radicans	coastal mazus		М			1					slow	0.1
Muehlenbeckia complexa	pohuehue	•		•	•	1	•				med	1.0



Two fast growing, versatile groundcovers are pohuehue, Muehlenbeckia complexa, and the yellow flowering native hibicus, Hibiscus diversifolius, (inset).

	F		hat car	n the p	lant to	erate	Bird food		Environs		Growth	
Ferns Botanical name Common name		Dry soil	Shade: light med heavy	Wind	Frost	Do possums eat it? 1-No 2-At times 3-Often	Food for: bellbird tui silvereye	Food for: pigeons (kukupa)	Coast salt hardy	Damp margins wetlands	Growth rate	Final height metres
Adiantum hispidulum	rosy maidenhair	•	L	•	11030	1	Silvereye	(какара)	·	wettanus	med	0.2
Adiantum cunninghamii	common maidenhair	•	М	•		1			•		med	0.35
Asplenium bulbiferum	hen & chicken fern	•	М			2					fast	0.8
Asplenium flaccidum	hanging spleenwort		М			1					slow	1.0
Asplenium lamprophyllum			L			1			•		slow	0.8
Blechnum discolor	crown fern		L		•	2					med	1.0
Blechnum novae-zelandiae	kiokio		L		•	1				•	fast	3.5
Cyathea cunninghamii	gully tree fern		М			2				•	slow	20
Cyathea dealbata	ponga, silver fern		М			1					slow	12
Cyathea medullaris	mamaku		М		•	3				•	slow	20
Dicksonia squarrosa	wheki		М		•	2				•	slow	7.0
Diplazium australe			М			2				•	med	2.0
Polystichum neozelandicum	common shield fern	•				2			•		slow	0.8
Pneumatopteris pennigera	gully ferns		М			2				•	fast	1.0
Pteris macilenta		•	М			2			•		med	1.4



A: Gully fern, **Pneumatopteris pennigera** B: Hen & chicken fern, **Asplenium bulbiferum** C: Rosy maidenhair, **Adiantum hispidulum D**: Crown fern, **Blechnum discolor** E: Wheki or rough tree fern, **Dicksonia squarrosa**

NATIVE TREES FOR KUKUPA FOOD

	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Best food	taraire		taraire	taraire
		karaka	karaka	
	nikau	nikau	nikau	nikau
	puriri	puriri	puriri	puriri
Good food			kohekohe	kohekohe
		miro	miro	
			kahikatea	
			pigeonwood	
	maire			
	titoki	titoki	titoki	
OK food		tawapou	tawapou	
		mahoe	mahoe	
		kotukutuku	kotukutuku	
		karamu	karamu	
			lancewood	lancewood
		tawa		
	five finger	five finger		

NATIVE TREES FOR TUI / SILVEREYE FOOD

	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Best food	flax species	flax species		
	kowhai			
	kahikatea	kahikatea		
			kohekohe	kohekohe
	pohutukawa	pohutukawa		
	puriri	puriri	puriri	puriri
	rewarewa			
Good food				five finger
	karo			karo
	mahoe	mahoe		
		rimu	rimu	
	totara	totara		
	wineberry	wineberry		
OK food	kotukutuku			
		lancewood	lancewood	
	mapou	mapou	mapou	
	puka	puka	puka	
		putaputaweta	putaputaweta	

During their breeding season (September-January) tui have a home range of four to five hectares, but at other times will fly up to 50 kilometres in search of food.

Silvereye have a breeding season home range of just one hectare but at other times will typically travel up to 10 kilometres for food.

These tree fruiting times are a guide only and may differ slightly in your area.

Planting information

When to plant

The best time to plant is from late May until mid-August. Without irrigation many trees will not survive being planted in dry soil. In dry winters, planting should not take place until enough rain has fallen to make the ground easy to dig.

Choosing a site

Careful site selection and good site preparation are the main ingredients for successful plant growth. Look at your site and list the limitations it may have. Is it a frost-prone area, does it have poor, swampy, dry or sandy soil? Is the site exposed to wind, especially salt wind if it is near the coast? Is the site north or south facing, sunny or shady?

Select plants to suit the conditions at your site. Look at what else is growing near your planting area. This may give you some indication of what to grow.

Before planting

The most important actions you can take are:

- Remove weeds in areas to be planted before you begin to plant; spot spray
 patches rather than blanket spraying to avoid bare patches that weeds can
 invade. Where kikuyu is dominant pre-spray twice in autumn to knock it
 back hard: initially in March, then again in May, four to six weeks out from
 planting.
- Plant reasonably close together to avoid weed infestations and use larger plants if possible to avoid them being overtaken by grass and weeds.

After planting

- Keep up the pest control. Don't waste all that early work only to have rabbits, possums or goats kill or damage your young trees.
- Possums can often be found in city gardens. Northland Regional Council biosecurity staff can advise on control.
- Release your plants regularly (at least twice a year) in the first couple of years, until they are tall enough to out-compete weeds. Using stakes (e.g. bamboo stakes dipped in white acrylic paint) to mark the position of young trees helps you find them later. If you spray grass and weeds, take care to avoid spray drift or accidental spray around your young plants.
- Mulch around young plants if possible to retain moisture and reduce weeds;
 use weeds that have been pulled out to help mulch around trees.



Further relevant publications by Northland Regional Council can be found at: www.nrc.govt.nz/publications

- Trees for the land growing trees for protection, production and pleasure
- Clean streams a guide to riparian management
- Looking after your wetland

Back cover: A tui in a kowhai.

Photo courtesy of Brian Chudleigh





WHĀNGĀREI: 36 Water Street, Private Bag 9021, Whāngārei Mail Centre, Whāngārei 0148; Phone 09 470 1200, Fax 09 470 1202.

DARGAVILLE: 61B Victoria Street, Dargaville; Phone 09 439 3300, Fax 09 439 3301.
 KAITĀIA: 192 Commerce Street, Kaitāiā; Phone 09 408 6600, Fax 09 408 6601.
 ÖPUA: Unit 10, Industrial Marine Park, Ōpua; Phone 09 402 7516, Fax 09 402 7510.

Freephone: 0800 002 004 | 24/7 Environmental Hotline: 0800 504 639
E-mail: mailroom@nrc.govt.nz | Website: www.nrc.govt.nz
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/companies/northland-regional-council
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