

# Leaf Bingo - Traditional Māori Uses



## Kowhai (South Island Kowhai)

*Sophora microphylla*

Bark used for treating:

- internal pains
- skin diseases
- bathing bruises
- healing fractures

Kowhai and mānuka often used together



## Traditional Māori Uses



## Mānuka (tea tree)

### *Leptospermum scoparium*

- Māori used the leaves and bark for medicinal purposes
- Leaves were used in vapour baths, gum was applied to scalds and burns, sap used as a blood and breath purifier
- The hard durable branches were fashioned into spears
- Wood from larger trees was used for canoe paddles
- “*The little red mānuka can break the tōtara into small pieces*” – the small tree provided material for wedges used to split tōtara.

## Traditional Māori Uses





## Tarata (Lemonwood)

*Pittosporum eugenioides*

- Leaves and flowers used as a scented garland
- Used for cosmetics - flowers or gum from this tree mixed with bird fat and other ingredients made a scented balm to rub on the skin

## Traditional Māori Uses



## Horopito (Pepperwood)

*Pseudowintera colorata*

- Leaves were steeped in water as a remedy for skin problems
- The peppery leaves were chewed to relieve toothache
- Modern Māori foods use the leaves as a spice



## Traditional Māori Uses



## Tōtara

*Podocarpus totara* and  
*Podocarpus cunninghamii*

- Tōtara was used for canoe and house building and was a prized carving wood
- The bark was woven into food baskets
- Layers of bark were used as splints for broken limbs
- Smoke from tōtara fire was used in treating skin ailments



## Traditional Māori Uses



## Kahikatea (White Pine)

*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*

- Valued for its long straight timber, also used for canoes
- Fruit was associated with birdlife and bird snares were set for the kererū
- Trees were climbed and baskets of fruit gathered in autumn or berries were shook onto mats on the ground
- Berries were eaten raw

## Traditional Māori Uses





## **Makomako** (Wineberry)

*Aristotelia serrata*

- Makomako berries were eaten and made into a drink
- The bark produced a blue/black dye
- Leaves were picked, boiled and the fluid used on burns and used for sore eyes
- Leaves were wrapped around burns



## **Traditional Māori Uses**





## Koromiko (Willow-leaved hebe)

### *Hebe salicifolia*

- Koromiko was one of the best known medicinal plants used by Māori and Pakeha alike
- The plant was used in vapour baths
- An infusion of leaves was a powerful astringent for dysentery and other complaints
- Bruised leaves were applied as poultices for ulcers
- The leaves were chewed (but not ingested) as a remedy for dysentery and diarrhoea

## Traditional Māori Uses



## Kotukutuku (Tree fuchsia)

### *Fuchsia excorticata*

- The sweet berry (named konini by Māori) is delicious to eat
- The berries make a sweet tasty jam
- Māori ate berries raw and also squeezed them to make a sweetish drink
- The watery sap from the tree was also drunk - by sucking it out from a cut off length of branch



## Traditional Māori Uses



## Kapuka (Broadleaf)

### *Griselinia littoralis*

- Inner bark was used for skin infections
- Dark fruit bitter to taste was eaten in times of food shortages
- Timber was known for its durability



## Traditional Māori Uses



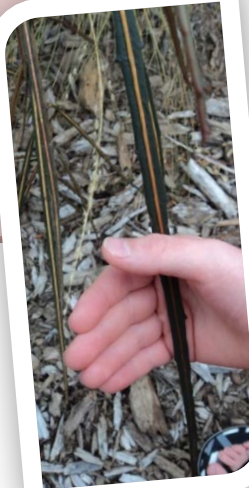


## Horoeka (Lancewood)

### *Pseudopanax crassifolius*

- It's said the flowering of lancewood was an indication that birds would be plentiful the following year, because the fruits take a whole year to ripen
- South Island Māori pounded lancewood leaves and extracted its long 'hairs' for use in a kind of paint brush that was used to make rock paintings
- The straight stems were often used as spears

## Traditional Māori Uses



## Pokaka

*Eleocarpus hookerianus*

- Used for medicine
- A solution made from the bark was used for severe skin disorders

## Traditional Māori Uses



Juvenile leaves



Adult leaf