

Pectinopitys ferruginea

COMMON NAME

miro, brown pine

SYNONYMS

Podocarpus ferruginea D.Don, Stachypitys ferruginea (D.Don) Bobrov et Melikyan nom. illegit., Stachycarpus ferruginea (D.Don) Tieghem, Prumnopitys ferruginea (D.Don) Laubenf.

FAMILY

Podocarpaceae

AUTHORITY

Pectinopitys ferruginea (G.Benn. ex D.Don in Lamb.) C.N.Page

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Gymnosperms

NVS CODE

PRUFER

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura.

HABITAT

Common tree of lowland to montane forest.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

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




Eastern Hutt hills. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 24/02/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 22/09/2004, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout tree up to 25 m tall. **Trunk** 1–1.5 m diameter, in adults clear of branches for  of length. **Bark** thick, grey, falling in thick, sinuous flakes. **Leaves** feathery, dark green, green to bronze-green, distichous, erect, narrow-linear, acute, falcate to subfalcate, acute to subacute, mid vein distinct, margins recurved, juveniles up to 30 mm long, those of adults 15–25 × 2–3 mm. **Male cones (strobili)** solitary, axillary, 5–15 mm long. **Ovules** solitary (rarely paired), on short branchlets ≤ 10 mm long. **Fruit** a broadly oblong to sub-spherical red, pink-red fleshy drupe up to 20 mm long, fleshy, oily, smelling and tasting strongly of terpenes; stone elliptic to broadly elliptic 11–17 mm long, dark brown to black-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

The bright green to bronze-green, feathery foliage, and pink-red, to red plum-like drupes are quite unlike any other New Zealand conifer. However young miro plants might be confused with yew (*Taxus baccata*), but can be distinguished by their lack of petioles.

FLOWERING

June–August–October

FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

FRUITING

Fruits take 12–18 months to mature. Ripe fruits are mainly found from November–April.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Seed may take up to 2 years to germinate. Can be grown from hard-wood cuttings but rather slow to strike.

THREATS

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

ETYMOLOGY

ferruginea: Rust coloured

CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

The large, oily, red fruits are an important part of the diet of the New Zealand pigeon/kererū/kukupā (*Hemiphaga novaezelandiae*).

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Stachypitys proposed by Bobrov & Melikyan (2000) is regarded as illegitimate because it is a parahomonym of *Stachyopitys* a fossil conifer genus. More recently Page (2019) created the genus *Pectinopitys* to accommodate New Zealand miro, allied species in Eastern Australia (one), New Caledonia (one), and three South American species. It has long been recognised that miro was an 'ill fit' in *Prumnopitys*, which was why Bobrov & Melikyan (2000) made an attempt to move it out of that genus, so this more recent segregation should come as no surprise.

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN, 3 February 2006. Description based on Allan (1961)

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.
- Bobrov AVFCh, Melikyan AP. 2000. Morphology of female reproductive structures and an attempt of the construction of phylogenetic system of orders Podocarpaceae, Cephalotaxales and Taxales. *Botanicheskii Zhurnal (Moscow & Leningrad)* 85(7):50–68.
- Page CN. 2019. New and maintained genera in the taxonomic alliance of *Prumnopitys* s.l (Podocarpaceae), and circumscription of a new genus: *Pectinopitys*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 57(3): 137–153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.2019.1625933>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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