

MARCH 2016 Plant of the Month.

Entelea arborescens (2 trees in the GBG)

Family: Malvaceae

Entelea: perfect - the pistils and stamens are on the same flower,
arborescens. becoming a tree

Monotypic: Single species closely related to Sparrmannia from Southern Africa

Common names : N.Z paper mulberry, Whau, Cork tree ,Cork wood,UK Evergreen lime



Endemic to New Zealand North Island/3Three Kings area and Golden bay South Island

Height: 3-6 meters Width 2-meter

Coastal to lowland forests

One of NZ fastest growing native trees. Grows wild through much of the North Island to the very northern part of the South Island and is somewhat frost tender, although can be cultivated successfully in the southern South Island if given a sheltered site. Fastest Likes, free draining soils sun to semi shade, and with shallow root system making it coastal situations

In forest, whau is essentially a transient opportunist species, secured through its prodigious seed production, the remarkably long life of the seed, and, after germination, rapid growth. It can quickly occupy ground where light has been temporarily let into the forest; its tremendous rate of growth; its ability to rapidly produce fruit; its enormous seed production, especially as it is about to die; and the fact that its seeds are capable of germinating as soon as the capsules open.

Wood. Greyish brown firm.

Lighter than some balsa and with specific gravity less than cork

Leaves: bright green double-toothed 10-25cm long and wide, frost tender.

Flowers: Spring, Profuse 2cm white scented flowers with a central spreading bunch yellow stamens in clusters.4-5 sepals and petals.

Fruit : November, capsules brown about 1.5 cm with 2.5 cm long rigid prickles

Seeds: brown prolific

Maori uses:

Bark strips easily making very strong fishing lines

Timber floats well- used for fishing floats, bouys, hunting,

Seasoned timber for boats bound together with 'supplejack' .

(Endemic NZ vine in the genus Ripogonum can entangle the forest floor, used for tying up numerous roofs platforms things and even a substitute for bike tyres)