

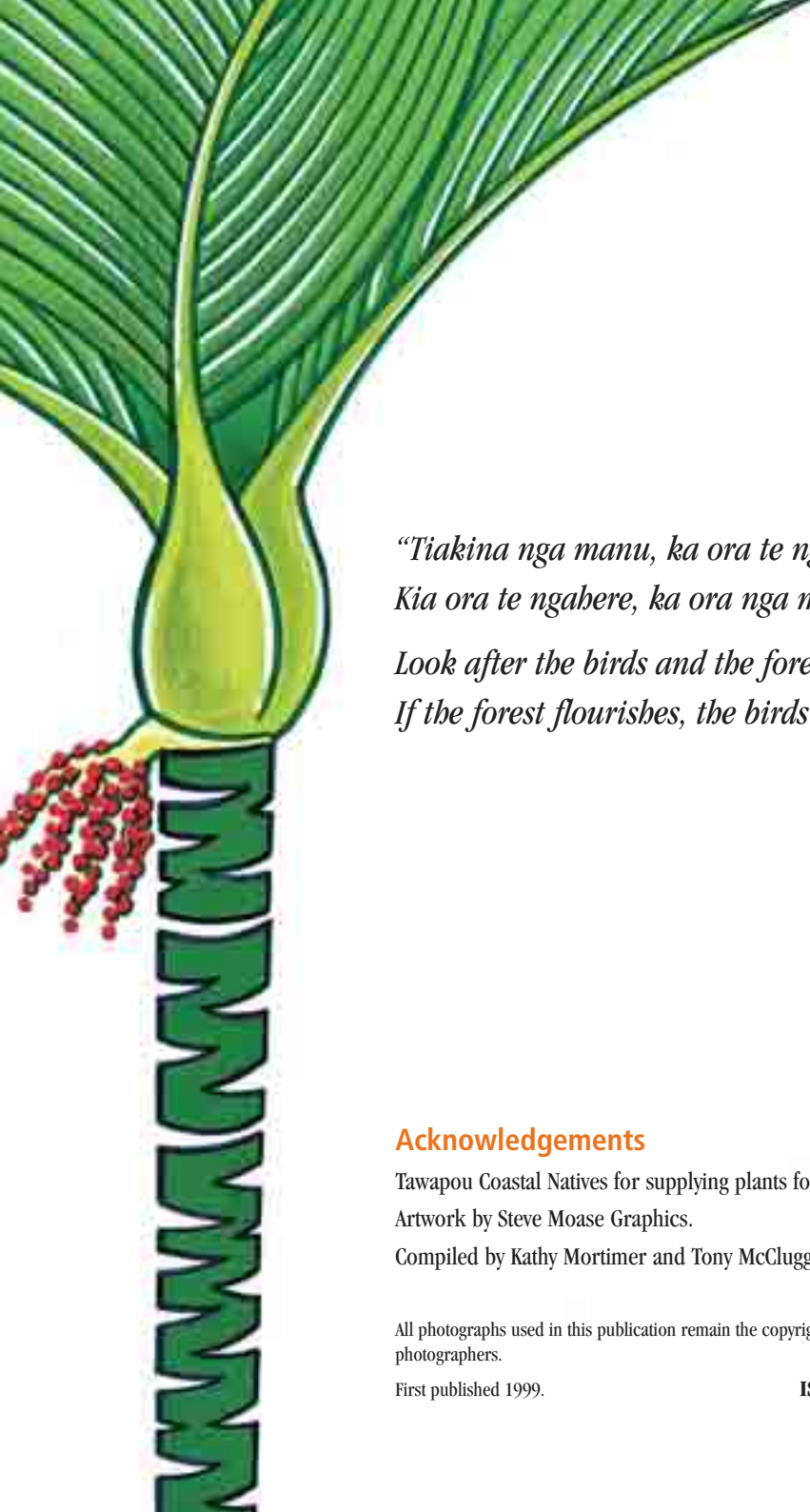
A Planters Handbook for **Northland Natives**

Including Special Plants for
Wetlands, Coast and Birdfood



Caring for Northland
and its environment

**NORTHLAND
REGIONAL
COUNCIL** 



*“Tiakina nga manu, ka ora te ngahere.
Kia 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.

Lists 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 what 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.



Photo: Brian Chadleigh

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 territorial pose at a favourite food stop - the flax flower. Photo: Brian Chadleigh

Plants to 6 metres

Plants to 6 metres		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
Botanical Name	Common Name											
<i>Alseuosmia macrophylla</i>	karapapa		M			2	•				med	1.5
<i>Clianthus puniceus</i>	kakabeak	•	L			3	•				fast	2
<i>Cordyline kasper</i>	3 Kings cabbage tree	•		•		1	•	•	•		med	4
<i>Coprosma propinqua</i>						2	•			•	med	6
<i>Corokia buddleoides</i>	korokia		L			1	•		•		med	3
<i>Geniostoma rupestre</i>	hangehange	•	M			2			•		med	3
<i>Hebe</i> spp.	hebe	•		•		2			•	•	fast	1-7
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	manuka	•		•	•	1			•	•	fast	4
<i>Lophomyrtus bullata</i>	ramarama	•		•		2	•				med	6
<i>Myrsine australis</i>	mapou	•		•	•	2	•		•		slow	6
<i>Myrsine divaricata</i>	weeping mapou		L			1				•	slow	4
<i>Olearia furfuracea</i>	akepiro	•	L			1			•		med	5
<i>Phormium tenax</i>	flax	•		•	•	1	•		•	•	med	3
<i>Solanum aviculare</i>	poroporo	•	M			2	•	•			fast	2.5
<i>Tecomanthe speciosa</i>	tecomanthe					1	•				fast	vine
<i>Pseudopanax lessonii</i>	houpara	•		•		2			•		med	6



Photo: Brian Chudleigh



Photo: Malcolm Pollman

Hebe speciosa spp. For a splash of colour hebes are a popular choice. There is a wide colour and size range available at nurseries. Most are hardy, quick growing and easily maintained. Inset: Flax provide food for many birds. A silvereye lines up its next sip of nectar.

Plants 6-8 metres

		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
Botanical Name	Common Name											
Aristotelia serrata	wineberry		L	•	•	3	•	•			fast	6
Brachylottis 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		M			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.



Photo: Brian Chudleigh

Photo: Brian Chudleigh

Photo: Malcolm Pollman

Karo, *Pittosporum crassifolium*, is quick to establish even in harsh coastal conditions and small birds feed on its sticky black seeds. Inset left: The striking purple fruit of mahoe, *Melicytus ramiflorus*. Inset right: Titoki, *Alectryon excelsus*, berries ready to eat.



Photo: Brian Chudleigh

Karaka, *Corynocarpus laevigatus*, fruit are an important part of the kukupa's summer diet.



Photo: Brian Chudleigh

One of nature's nursery crops kanuka, *Kunzea ericoides*, in full flower.



Photo: Brian Cuddeigh

Photo: Nan Pullman

Luxuriant foliage and flowers of a healthy pest-free taraire, *Beilschmiedia tarairi*, promise a rich fruit harvest for kukupa.
Inset: The vivid red flower of the rata.



Photo: Malcolm Pullman

Native grasses, rushes and sedges are becoming increasingly popular in rock garden settings: **A:** Coastal snow tussock, *Chionochloa bromoides* **B:** Needle grass, *Stipa stipoides* **C:** Rengarenga, *Arthropodium cirratum* **D:** Coastal astelia, *Astelia banksii*.



Photo: Malcolm Pullman

Photo: Malcolm Pullman

Two fast growing, versatile groundcovers are pohuehue, *Muehlenbeckia complexa*, and the yellow flowering native hibiscus, *Hibiscus diversifolius*.

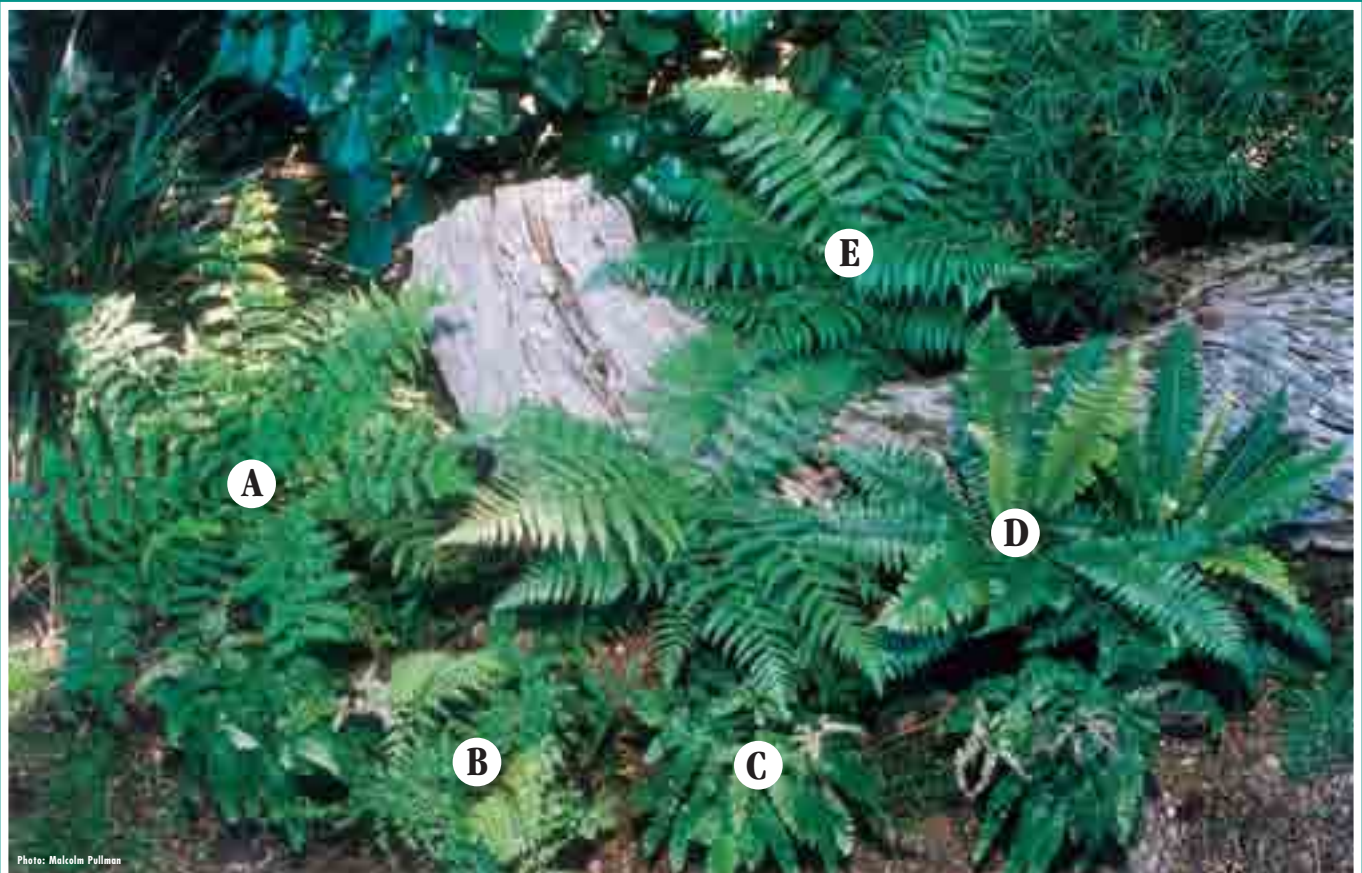
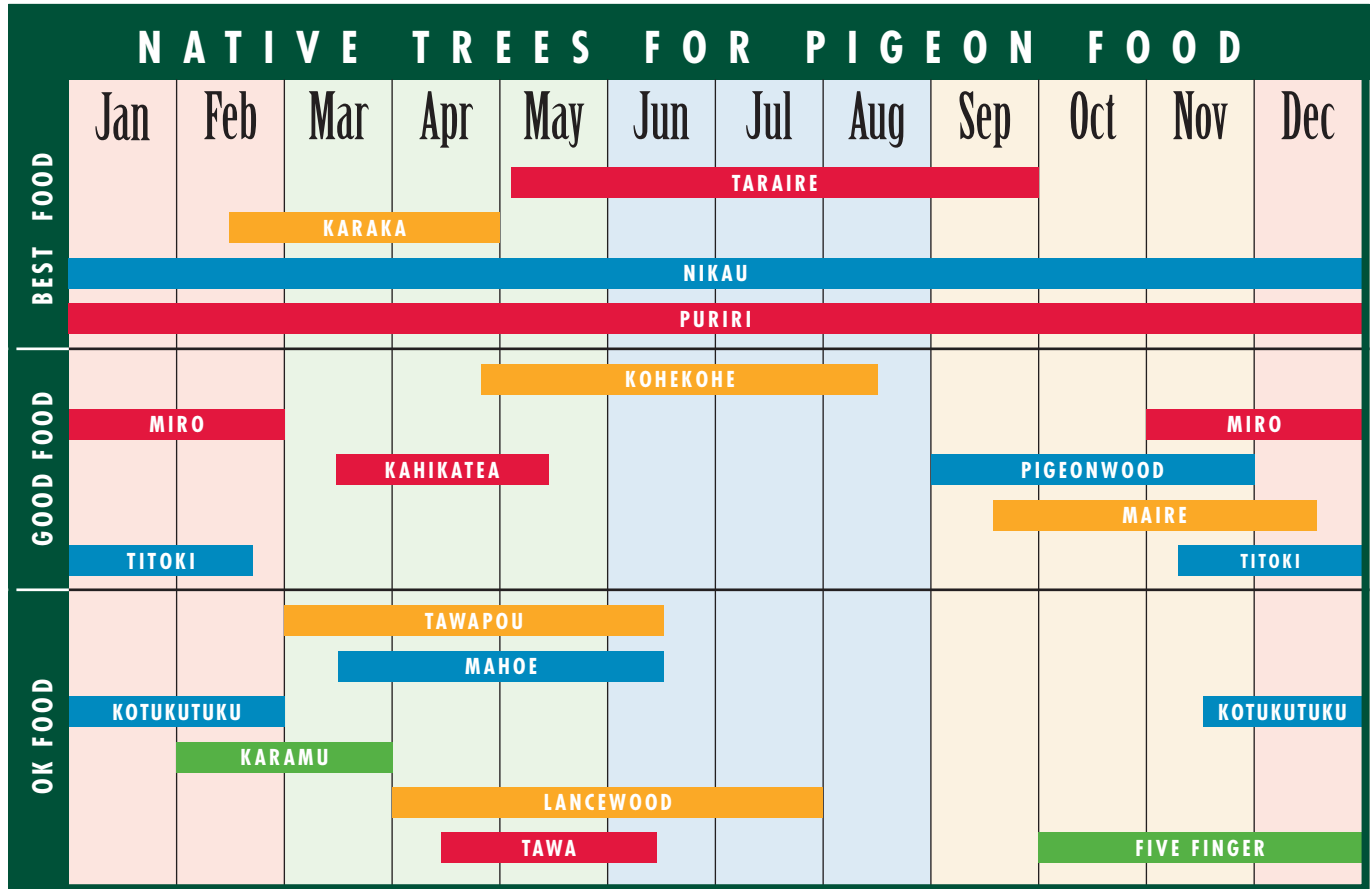


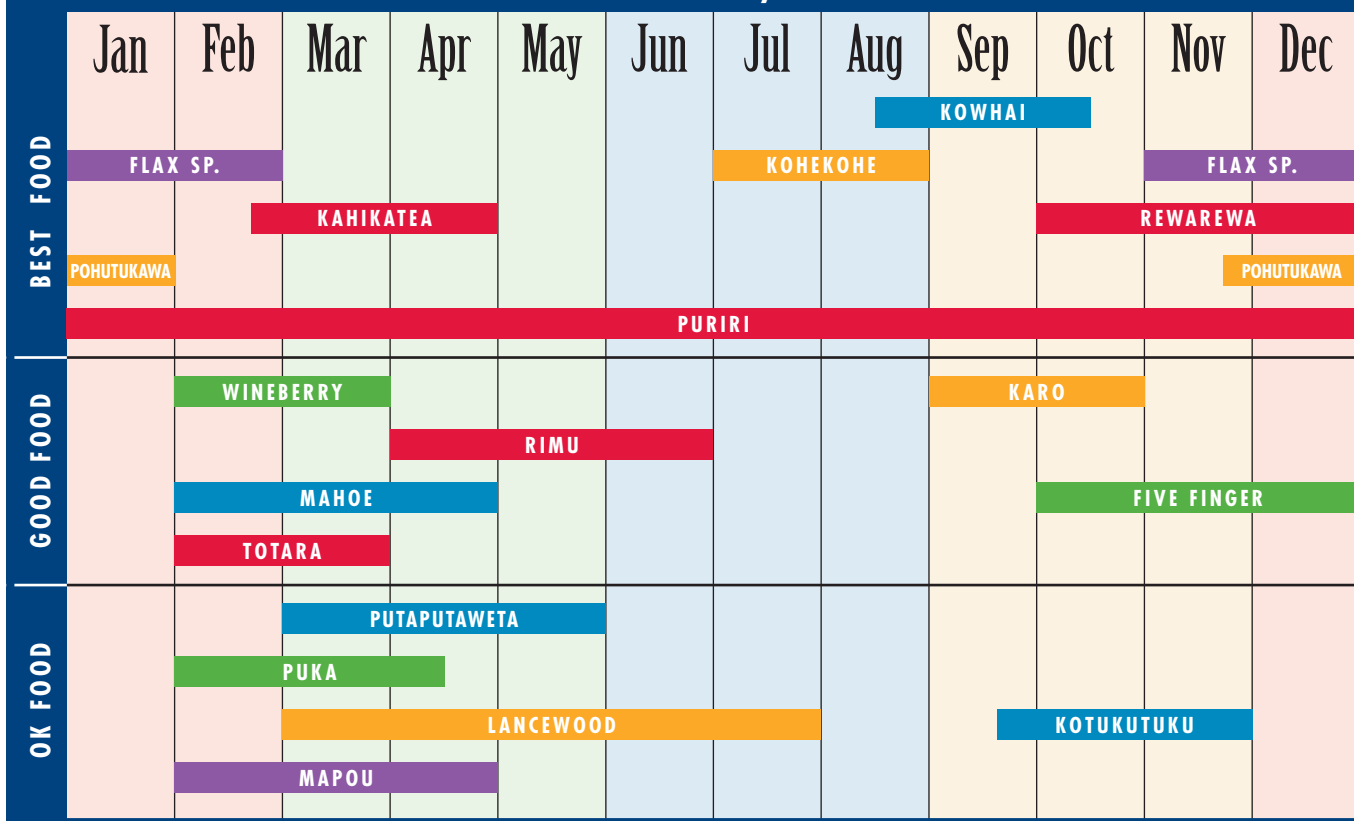
Photo: Malcolm Pullman

A wide range of ferns are available for those shadier areas of the garden. **A:** Gully fern, *Pneumatopteris pennigera* **B:** Hen & Chicken Fern, *Asplenium bulbiferum* **C:** Rosy Maidenhair, *Adiantum bispidulum* **D:** Crown fern, *Blechnum discolor* **E:** Wheki or rough tree fern, *Dicksonia squarrosa*.



During the breeding season (July - February) the home range of Kukupu can be 4-5 hectares or even smaller if there is sufficient food. During the non-breeding season Kukupu will fly several kilometres for different foods. These tree fruiting times are a guide only and may differ slightly in your area.

NATIVE TREES FOR TUI/SILVER EYE FOOD



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 September. 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 -

- If you live in the country, fencing out stock is absolutely essential.
- Eliminate weeds and grass from the planting area either physically or by spraying a spot where you wish to put each plant approximately six weeks beforehand. It is wise to mulch each plant, especially if you have not sprayed.
- Control pests. What pests do you have? If you don't deal with rabbits, hares and possums then many plants may be damaged or destroyed.

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. Your Regional Council can advise on control.
- Clear any competing weeds and grass from around your trees. This may be either by chemical or mechanical means and generally needs to be done in the first and second years.

You can help protect the uniqueness of New Zealand by removing the plants that are environmental weeds from your garden. Remember to dispose of them carefully by taking them to an approved landfill or transfer station. You can also compost them, making sure that all parts are completely rotted down.



Above: A cabbage tree in full bloom.

Opposite: Puriri Flowers.

Photo: Brian Chudleigh

Photo: Brian Chudleigh

Further relevant publications

Northland Regional Council

- Trees for the Land - growing trees for protection, production and pleasure
- Clean Streams - a guide to riparian management
- Wetland Restoration - a beginners guide
- Animal Pest Information - series of pamphlets
- Pest Plant Information - series of pamphlets

Department of Conservation

- Kukupa: Native Wood Pigeon Survival Guide
- Ecology and Breeding Biology of Kukupa in Northland
- Department of Conservation Strategic Plan for Managing Invasive Weeds

More extensive plant lists are available from the Department of Conservation.

Back Cover: A Tui topping up with nectar from a flowering kowhai.

Photo: Brian Chudleigh

*Back Cover Inset: Open wide - a silvereye prepares to swallow a ripe berry in a Three Kings Cabbage Tree, **Cordyline kasper**.*

Photo: Malcolm Pullman



Caring for Northland and its environment

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