

Plant List: Common Native Species Suitable for Urban Gardens in Auckland Central

This list of native plants has been collated to include common species that will growth in the Auckland Central environment and are easily sourced from most garden centres and independent nurseries in the Auckland Region. This is not an exhaustive list but is intended to provide a good starting point for planning a native garden.

The tables below are separated into general plant sizes such as medium height trees and small trees as well as shrubs, climbers and ground covers. Information is provided on plant characteristics which will influence the location and conditions in which the individual species are positioned within the garden. Brief notes are also provided on their potential use or appearance within your garden. Taller trees are not included in this list as Auckland gardens tend to be too small to accommodate them.

Medium Trees

Species	Mature height	Mature width	Sun	Shade	Dry soil tolerance	Moist soil tolerance	Boggy Soil tolerance	Poor clay tolerance	Harsh wind tolerance	Notes
Titoki <i>Alectryon excelsus</i>	8-12m	4-6m	Full sun	Needs shade to establish	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerates some wind	Good specimen tree or plant in groups as tree hedging
Tarata/ Lemonwood <i>Pittosporum eugenioides</i>	5-10m	3-5 m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerates some wind	Tall hedging plant if clipped regularly
Kohuhu <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>	5-8m	2-4m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerates some wind	Hedging plant if clipped regularly
Kowhai <i>Sophora microphylla</i>	4-8m	3m	Full sun	Not tolerant	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerates some wind	Bright yellow flowers in spring attract native birds
Karaka <i>Corynocarpus laevigatus</i>	10-15m	5-7m	Full sun	Needs shade to establish	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerates some wind	Large orange berries favoured by Kereru.

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Rewarewa <i>Nightia excelsa</i>	15-25m	3-4m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant if free draining	Not tolerant	Yes as long as it drains eg a slope	Tolerant	Nectar rich, red flowers attract native birds and insects. Tall, but slender tree.
Pukatea <i>Laurelia novae-zelandiae</i>	10-30m	5-10m	Roots need shade	Needs shade to establish	Not tolerant	Prefers moist soil	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Slow growing. Distinctive buttress roots and lower trunk

Small trees/large shrubs

Species	Mature height	Mature width	Sun	Shade	Dry soil tolerance	Moist soil tolerance	Boggy Soil tolerance	Poor clay tolerance	Harsh wind tolerance	Notes
Putaputawheta <i>Carpodetus serratus</i>	7m	7m	Full sun to part shade	Needs shade to establish	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Some tolerance	Not tolerant	Attracts Wetas
Ti kouka/ Cabbage tree <i>Cordyline australis</i>	5m	2.5m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Versatile. Distinctive architectural form
Ti ngahere/ Forest cabbage tree <i>Cordyline banksii</i>	2m	1.5m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Some tolerance	Reddish-brown to purple leaves. Flax like form
Ponga/ Silver tree fern <i>Cyathea dealbata</i>	6-10m	5m	Full sun	Full shade	Tolerates some dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Distinctive NZ tree fern, silver/white underneath leaves

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Makomako/ Wineberry <i>Aristotelia serrata</i>	6m	4m	Part sun	Full shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Food source for native birds
Mapou/ Red matipo <i>Myrsine australis</i>	3m	3m	Full sun	Part shade. Needs shade to establish	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Hedging plant if clipped. Red stems
Whauwhaupaku/ Five finger <i>Pseudopanax arboreus</i>	5m	2m	Full sun	Part shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Food source for native birds. Gives a tropical vibe to gardens. Distinctive leaf shape
Horoeka / Lancewood <i>Pseudopanax crassifolius</i>	4m	2m	Full sun	Needs shade to establish	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Not tolerant	Architectural specimen. Mature tree provides visual interest at height.
Nikau <i>Pseudopanax crassifolius</i>	7m	2m	Full sun (shade at base)	Part shade/ needs shade to establish	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Gives a sub-tropical vibe to gardens. Food source for native birds. Slow growing
Manuka <i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	4m	2m	Full sun	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Fast growing, hardy. White flowers, also pink and red cultivars, which attract insects.
Whau <i>Entelea arborescens</i>	3-6m	3-8m	Full sun	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Prefers moist but well drained soil	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	No tolerance at all	Large lime leaves give tropical look. Interesting spiky seed pods. Fast growing

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Kapuka <i>Griselinia littoralis</i>	5-8m	2-4m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Some tolerance	Popular for hedging
Kawakawa <i>Piper excelsum</i>	4-5m	2m	Not tolerant	Loves shade or part shade	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance, prefers shelter	Female plants have berries that attract native birds

Shrubs and flax like plants

Species	Mature Height	Width	Sun	Shade	Dry	Moist	Boggy	Poor clay	Harsh wind	Notes
Hebe species	1m	1m	Full sun	Tolerates part shade. A few species tolerate shade	Tolerant	Some tolerance if free draining	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Flowers throughout the year with small to large sprays of intense colour. Many cultivars available
Taupata <i>Coprosma repens</i>	1-5m	1-3m	Tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Female trees produce orange berries that attract native birds. Shiny dark green leaves.
Houpara <i>Pseudopanax lessonii</i>	1-4m	1-2m	Full sun	Part shade	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Tropical appearance. Berries attract native birds.
Harakeke/ flax <i>Phormium tenax</i>	3m	2m	Full sun	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Flowers are a good food source for native birds, insects and geckos. Architectural plant.

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Wharariki/ mountain flax <i>Phormium cookianum</i>	1m	1m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Shiny green, wide, often drooping leaves. Flowers are a good food source for native birds, insects and geckos
Corokia species	2-4m	1-2m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Different cultivars with different coloured leaves – brown, red, silver and green. Food source for native birds. Can be used for hedging.
Tawhirikaro <i>Pittosporum cornifolium</i>	2m	2m	Part sun	Full shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tropical appearance with interesting looking sweet smelling flowers. Slow growing
Kumerahou <i>Pomaderris kumeraho</i>	2-3m	1-2m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Profuse yellow flowers in spring. Hardy

Vines and climbers

Species	Mature Height	Width	Sun	Shade	Dry	Moist	Boggy	Poor clay	Harsh wind	Notes
Puawananga/ Bush clematis <i>Clematis paniculata</i>	3m	1.5m	Full sun. Prefers shade to establish	Needs shade at roots	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Spectacular showing of white flowers in spring

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Akakura/ Climbing rata <i>Metrosideros carminea</i>	1m	2m	Full sun. Prefers shade to establish	Part shade	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Showy red flowers in late winter-early spring.
Kaiku/ NZ jasmine <i>Parsonsia heterophylla</i>	4-10m	1m	Full sun. Prefers shade to establish	Part shade. Needs shade at roots	Some tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerant	Sweet scented creamy white flowers

Ferns

Species	Mature Height	Width	Sun	Shade	Dry	Moist	Boggy	Poor clay	Harsh wind	Notes
Manamana/ Hen and chicken fern <i>Asplenium bulbiferum</i>	1m	1m	Part sun	Full shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Produces baby fernlets along the mature fronds
Kiokio <i>Blechnum novae-zealandiae</i>	2m	1.5m	Part sun	Full shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Good for banks or wall cover. Reddish tinge to new leaves. Drooping leaves
Crown fern <i>Blechnum discolor</i>	1m	1m	Part sun	Full shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Upright fronds. Good ground cover beneath specimen trees.
Maidenhair <i>Adiantum</i> species	0.3m	1m	Part sun	Full shade	Some tolerance	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Distinctive ground cover fern.

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Low ground plants

Species	Mature Height	Width	Sun	Shade	Dry	Moist	Boggy	Poor clay	Harsh wind	Notes
Rengarenga <i>Arthropodium cirratum</i>	0.7m	0.7m	Full sun	Full shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Good for mass plantings. Tall starry white flowers in spring.
Ti rauriki/ Dwarf cabbage tree <i>Cordyline pumilio</i>	1m	1m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Short cabbage tree Great architectural form
Turutu/ NZ blueberry <i>Dianella nigra</i>	0.6m	0.6m	Part sun	Full shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Good for mass plantings. Distinctive purple berries.
Large flowered iris <i>Libertia grandiflora</i>	1m	0.75m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Tolerant	White iris like flowers in spring
Mikoikoi/ NZ iris <i>Libertia ixioides</i>	0.5m	0.4m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Some tolerance	Not tolerant	Yellow green leaves and small white flowers in summer.
Pannakenake <i>Pratia angulata</i>	0.02m	1m	Full sun	Part shade	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Some tolerance	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Groundcover with small white flowers
Trailing fuchsia <i>Fuchsia procumbens</i>	0.2m	1-2m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant of dry spells	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Fast growing ground creeper. Small yellow/red flowers. Great over rocks or walls
Coastal astelia <i>Astelia banksii</i>	0.5m	1m	Full sun	Part to full shade	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Berries attract native birds. Architectural plant

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Sand coprosma <i>Coprosma acerosa</i>	1m	1m	Full sun	Part shade	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Good bank stabiliser. Sprawling groundcover shrub with tangled leaves. Very hardy. Slow growing
Pohuehue <i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i>	0.5m unless climbing	2m	Sun	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Tolerant	Will grow up supports like a trellis or trees as well as sprawling along ground. Vigorous -can outcompete weeds
Tussocks <i>Carex</i> species <i>Poa anceps</i>	0.3-1.5m	0.3-1m	Full sun for some species.	Part shade Some species tolerate full shade	Some species tolerant	Tolerant	Some species are tolerant	Some species have some tolerance	Varies with species	Many different species with different colours and preferences for sun, shade, and moisture levels