

# Maori Uses of Native Plants

Names : \_\_\_\_\_ \* **Answers** \* \_\_\_\_\_

1. This plant is \_\_\_\_\_ **Ti Kouka (Cabbage Tree)** \_\_\_\_\_

Guess what early Maori might have used the parts of this plant for :

Leaves : Inner bulb of the leaf was eaten; fibre for ropes, weaving for, sandals, mats

Trunk : Was cooked and eaten

2. This plant is \_\_\_\_\_ **Ngaio** \_\_\_\_\_

This plant has toxic oil in its leaves. Hold the leaf card up to the light.

What does the oil in the leaves look like? \_\_\_\_\_ **Spots** \_\_\_\_\_

Early Maori crushed up these leaves and rubbed them on their bodies.

Why would you rub toxic oil on your own skin?

Insect repellent

3. This plant is \_\_\_\_\_ **Kapuka (Broadleaf)** \_\_\_\_\_

Berries from this tree were only eaten in emergencies if food ran out because they taste very bitter.

How could you recognise this plant from all the others if you were starving and need food?

Rounded, shiny green leaves

4. This plant is Harakeke (Flax)

Guess what early Maori might have used the parts of this plant for :

Leaves : Fibre for string; weaving for kete, clothing and mats etc

Gum : Glue and antiseptic.

5. This plant is Kowhai

This tree has yellow flowers in spring and is named after the colour of these flowers.

What do you think early Maori extracted from the flowers?

Dye for clothing

6. This plant is Toe Toe

The hollow stem of this plant helped students to learn. How do you think it was used?

Water was dripped through the stem into the left ear of the student to symbolise filling their head with knowledge.

Students also chewed the root end of a plant with a similar name to help them memorise. How could chewing help your memory ?

Chewing stops you talking!

7. This plant is Wiwi (Tussock grass)

When woven this plant produced a waterproof covering. What could early Maori have used this material for?

Raincapes and roofing

8. This plant is Tarata (Lemonwood)

The leaves of this tree were sometimes used by a man to charm a woman who had refused to see him. The tree is easily recognised by the smell of the crushed leaves?

What do the crushed leaves smell like? (Please be gentle with them)

Lemon

How do you think he would have used the leaves to charm her?

As a perfume / deodorant

9. This plant is Kokomuka (Hebe)

Chewing the fresh leaves of this bush stops diarrhoea.

Why do dried leaves not have the same effect?

The chemicals which stop diarrhoea are soluble in water so once the water has evaporated (in the dry leaves) they are no longer effective

10. This plant is Totara

Larger specimens of these trees were used to build waka, which could hold up to 100 warriors. The bark of this tree was also widely used.

What do you think the bark could be used for?

Torches, containers, wrapping poha (seaweed bags) and a splint for broken bones.