

Mountain cabbage tree

Cordyline indivisa



Synonyms: *Dracaena australis*

Family: Agavaceae (Century-plant Family)

Cordyline indivisa is a monocot tree endemic to New Zealand, where it is called mountain cabbage tree or bush flax. It is also known as the broad-leaved cabbage tree, and in the Māori language as tōī.

Edible parts of Cabbage Tree:

Root - baked. It can also be brewed into an intoxicating drink. Pith of the trunk - dried and steamed until soft. Sweet and starchy, it is used to make porridge or a sweet drink. The root and stems are rich in fructose, the yields compare favourably with sugar beet (*Beta vulgaris altissima*). Edible shoots - a cabbage substitute. The leaves are very fibrous even when young, we would not fancy eating them.

Other uses of Cabbage Tree:

The leaves contain saponins, but not in commercial quantities. The leaves contain a strong fibre, used for making paper, twine, cloth, baskets, thatching, rain capes etc. The whole leaves would be used for some of these applications. When used for making paper, the leaves are harvested in summer, they are scraped to remove the outer skin and are then soaked in water for 24 hours prior to cooking.

