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*Dacrydium cupressinum*

**RED PINE** is an evergreen tree. Native to New Zealand, Malaysia, the Pacific islands and Tasmania, it has tiny cones.

It is also known as New Zealand red pine, *Rimu* (Maori), and Rimu pine.

*Cupressinum* is derived from the genus name *Cupressus* meaning ‘like plants in that (cypress) genus’.

Maoris used the resinous heartwood for torches.

They sometimes ate the red cups of the fruit raw. Harvesting these however was extremely dangerous and needed considerable climbing skills that were considered to be a male preserve.

The young branches have provided an ingredient for a spruce beer of not an especially palatable taste – for Europeans at least. Apparently when the famous English navigator, Captain Cook (1728-1779) was in the region, he ordered beer to be made from them as a scurvy preventative. The addition of leaves of a local ‘tea plant’ (*Leptospermum scoparium*) is said to have received general approval from his crew as they were believed to have improved the flavour although it diluted the effectiveness of any medicinal qualities.

The bark has been used for tanning. It will stain leather a slightly red colour.

The reddish-yellow wood is admired for its beautiful markings and has been chosen for a wide range of uses from ships’ keels and bridge building to house interiors and furniture. In addition to construction and furniture this wood is being used on a commercial scale at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries for making railway sleepers too.

Medicinally, the bark has been used by the Maoris, (preferably harvested on the side of the tree facing the rising sun). The gum has been used to stem bleeding, and an infusion of the leaves has been used to treat sores and ulcers.