Agathis atropurpurea B.Hyland

Family:
Araucariaceae

Hyland, B.P.M. (1978) *Brunonia* 1(3): 109. Type: Hyland 5776, Bellenden Ker Range, Jan. 1972, Holotypus BRI


Leaves and cone/fruit. © CSIRO

Common name:
Queensland Kauri Pine; Black Kauri; Blue Kauri; Kauri; Kauri, Black; Kauri, Blue; Kauri, Mountain; Kauri, North Queensland; Mountain Kauri; North Queensland Kauri; Pine, Queensland Kauri

Stem

Bark blue, purple or almost black except on large trees where it is brown. However, even on large trees some blue or black colouration is usually evident. Stems producing resin from even minor wounds and gum often present at the base.

Leaves

Leaf blades about 3-7 x 0.5-2 cm. Veins fine and close, running +/- parallel to the blade margin. Some veins usually depressed on the upper surface.

Flowers

Male cones less than 3 cm long, distinctly pedunculate. Scales slightly rounded at the apex and tending to overlap.

Fruit

Cones usually less than 6 cm diam. each with about 90-150 scales.

Seedlings

Cotyledons lanceolate, a number of +/- parallel veins run from base to apex. Cataphylls are produced above the cotyledons and after lateral shoots are produced. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves lanceolate, apex acute, base cuneate or obtuse; venation fine and close, running parallel to the blade margin. Seed germination time 9 days.


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Distribution and Ecology

Endemic to NEQ, restricted to the area from Mt Pieter Botte and southwards to Mt Bartle Frere. Altitudinal range from 750-1500 m. A characteristic tree of the ridge tops in mountain rain forest and usually found on soils derived from granite.


Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO

Natural History & Notes

Smaller trees of this species have a smooth to slightly flaky, dark coloured bark variously described as blue, purple or black. However, large trees have a brown, rough and flaky bark and in the past were mistakenly identified as Bull Kauri (Agathis microstachya). In the 1920's and 1930's a small industry developed gathering the resin of A. atropurpurea but it never assumed the dimensions of the industry in New Zealand and semi-fossilized swamp deposits were never discovered. The Queensland Forestry Department was reluctant to encourage the industry because resin collectors deliberately wounded the trees to encourage the resin flows.

The timber of this species has had a wide range of uses and is more or less comparable to Araucaria cunninghamii.

Wood specific gravity 0.48. Cause et al. (1989).


10th leaf stage. © CSIRO

RFK Code

401

Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO