

Botanical Art Feature

Passiflora tetrandra,

Eleanor Burton, 2004 Art competition.

Passiflora tetrandra

Kohia, New Zealand Passionfruit

Kohia is the only endemic species in this genus, which includes passionfruit. This plant is a vigorous climber, climbing easily into the tops of canopy trees. The plant can live to a considerable age, possibly up to 200 yrs, with vines reaching a diameter of up to 14 cm. It is found from Northland to Canterbury in lowland and montane forest. It has small white scented flowers, followed by large orange fruits in autumn. These are a food source for birds. Male and female flowers are found on separate plants.

The pulp of the fruit was eaten by the Maori, who also extracted a fragrant oil from the seeds. They used this as a body oil.

This plant is grown in cultivation. It likes shade for its roots, and needs lots of room to climb! Two plants are necessary for fruit.

My drawing shows a young shoot with female flowers and developing fruit; male flowers; fruit; and an older shoot (top left) with more typical (if somewhat chewed) foliage.

For other entries in the inaugural Audrey Eagle Botanical Drawing competition 2005, and entry forms for this year's 2005 competition, see: <http://www.botany.otago.ac.nz/bsc>

Entry forms and BSO membership forms are also available on the rack outside the Botany secretaries' office, and on p 26.

