

The Kauri's Story



Kauri trees belong to an ancient family of plants. Instead of having flowers and fruit, kauri have cones. Long before people came to New Zealand, when moa walked and giant eagles flew, kauri were growing in the forest. Millions of years ago when dinosaurs walked in the forest, kauri were there too.

1000 years ago, in the top of a kauri tree, a kaka was feeding. She broke into the kauri cones with her strong beak to eat the winged seeds. She dropped a seed, which flew away on the wind.

It's dangerous being a seed. You may get eaten or land somewhere you can't grow. This seed was lucky. It landed on soft soil in a clearing.



I'm growing taller as fast as I can. I'm racing the other young kauri trees.

I won the race! Now I'm the tallest tree in the forest. My leaves are in the sunlight, shading the trees below. I've seen brown-skinned people come in canoes and pale-skinned people come in sailing ships. Moa are extinct now and very little kauri forest is left, but I'm still here, protected in Paketi Conservation Park.

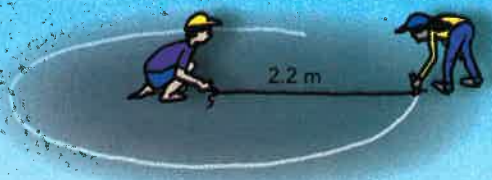


Plants have to have lots of seeds because only a few will survive and grow up. A kauri cone has about 100 seeds. On average the tree has 1000 cones every year. Our tree has been growing for 940 years.

How many seeds has it produced?
Answer page 21.

Our kauri's big, but not as big as Tane Mahuta – our biggest living kauri. Its trunk is 4.38m across. Here's how to draw it and see how big that is!

- You need:
- flat concrete or asphalt
 - 2.3 metres of string
 - chalk
 - someone to help you



Tie one end of the string to the chalk. Ask your helper to hold the other end on the ground. This will be the centre of the trunk. Keep the string tight and walk round the centre, drawing a circle with the chalk. That's about how fat Tane Mahuta's trunk is!

The largest recorded kauri's trunk was 5.8 metres across! It was destroyed by fire in 1890. What a shame!

AGE of TREE	0	1 month old	1 year	30 years	Māori arrive	Captain Cook arrives	European settlers arrive	940 years
DATE	1011	1011	1012	1041	1311	1769	1840	1951