

# *hō`awa* (*Pittosporum argentifolium*, *Pittosporum glabrum*)

PITTOSPORACEAE, pittosporum family



*Pittosporum argentifolium* Sherff.

This species is endemic to Moloka`i and leeward East Maui (Wagner et al. 1990:1039).

*Pittosporum glabrum* Hook. & Arnott.

This species is endemic to Kaua`i, O`ahu, Moloka`i, Lāna`i, and Maui (Wagner et al. 1990:1043).

Another Hawaiian name for native species is *hā`awa* (Pukui and Elbert 1986).

Summary statement of uses: The wood of *hō`awa* has religious significance.

The only specific known ethnobotanical use for this species is as a type of ceremonial firewood in ‘*ana`ana*’ magic (Kamakau 1991). As part of the description, Kamakau (1991:126) stated, “In preparing for the prayer ritual of a *kuni* ceremony, the *kapuahi kuni*, the ritual fireplace, was set blazing with *ho`awa* and ‘*akia*’ with stalks and leaves still green. The firesticks were rubbed (*hi`a ke ahi*), and the fire lighted with green leaves serving as kindling and green wood as fuel, and it sprung into a blaze.”

Status at Auwahi: *Pittosporum argentifolium* is apparently extinct at Auwahi, last collected there in 1921. *Pittosporum glabrum* is extremely rare at Auwahi, but is more common in moister forests on Maui and elsewhere.

