

naio (*Myoporum sanswicense* var. *degeneri*)

MYOPORACEAE, figwort family



This species is indigenous to Mangaia in the Cook Islands and on all the main Hawaiian Islands (Wagner et al. 1990). Hillebrand (1888) gives the Hawaiian names for this species as *naea* and *naieo*. The wood of *naio* is referred to as *`a`aka* (Pukui and Elbert 1986).

Summary statement of uses: The wood of *naio* was used in housebuilding and in making canoe parts and fishing torches.

Kamakau (1976) stated that straight trunks of *naio* and several other dryland trees were preferred for posts of houses. The complete quote from Kamakau (1976) is given under the species account of *`a`ali`i*. Holmes (1981) noted that *naio* wood was used for construction of the bow and stern ornamental end pieces (*manu*) and gunnels.

Hillebrand (1888) states that the wood, particularly that of the roots, becomes fragrant on drying with an odor resembling sandalwood.

Lennox (1967) wrote of this species, “Used for house timbers, fishing torches.”

Naio, as well as other dryland forest trees *`ahakea*, *alahe`e*, *`iliah*i (as *`aoa*), *kauila*, *neneleau `ūlei*, and *wiliwili* are mentioned in the Hawaiian creation chant, Kumulipo (Beckwith 1972). The *naio* tree is matched with the ‘sea-worm’ (Beckwith 1972).

Status at Auwahi: *Naio* trees are still fairly common throughout Auwahi but based on the numbers of dead trunks of this species in many areas, used to be much more common.