



ASTELIA

(Astelia Banksia)
Kowharawhara

**Forest
Floor 1m**



Description:

- A plant of the northern coastal bush, astelias grow not only on the forest floor but in the crook of large trees. They are epiphytes
- They spread by rhizomes---horizontal, underground stems. These rhizomes are not so tolerant of damp soils and are not so successfully divided when propagating
- *A. banksii* leaves are grey and narrow with white scales on the underside

Fruit & Flowers:

- Astelia have male and female flowers on separate plants. Occurring from autumn to winter the flowers are a pale cream
- The berries, found near the base of the female, are green turning reddish upon maturity. They are found throughout most of the year. Food for the pigeons and kakariki

Pests & Diseases:

- Astelia are prone to rot so require a well aerated situation

Uses:

- Mixed with flax (harakeke) and pingao, astelia is used in weaving. Especially baskets (kete)