

Kalia

Elaeocarpus bifidus Hook. & Arn.

Elaeocarpus family (Elaeocarpaceae)

Native species (endemic)

Medium-sized evergreen tree of wet forests of Kauai and Oahu, with ovate hairless leaves, small greenish flowers, and shiny dark brown stone fruit. To about 30 ft (9 m) tall and 1 ft (0.3 m) in trunk diameter. Bark dark gray, rough, thin, fibrous. Branches and twigs slender, drooping hairless, ending in gummy or varnished bud.

Leaves alternate, hairless, with slender leafstalks 1¼–4 inches (4–10 cm) long. Blades ovate, 3–6 inches (7.5–15 cm) long and 1¼–¾ inches (4–8 cm) wide, long-pointed at apex, short-pointed at base, wavy toothed on edges, thin, shiny green above.

Flower clusters (racemes) at leaf bases, unbranched, 1¼–¾ inches (3–8 cm) long. Flowers 5–8 on stalks of ⅜ inch (1 cm), almost ⅜ inch (1 cm) long, pale greenish yellow, narrowly bell-shaped, composed of 4–5 thick pointed sepals ⅝ inch (8 mm) long, 4–5 thick, narrowed and notched petals as long as sepals, 14–21 stamens on a disk, much shorter than petals, and pistil with egg-shaped 2–3-celled ovary, short style, and 2–3-forked stigma.

Stone fruit (drupe) elliptical and olive-shaped or rounded, about ¾–1 inch (2–2.5 cm) long, shiny dark brown, with thick hard stone, single-seeded.

Wood whitish, soft, fine-textured, and straight-grained. Wood of a different species, *Elaeocarpus joga* Merrill from Guam, in tests was found suitable for interior parts in furniture.

Hawaiians formerly made rope from the fibrous bark. The larger branches served for house rafters, and the slender ones for thatching rods.

Some flower clusters are deformed by mites and become bright red as if showy flowers. The trees are attacked by mistletoes also.

Common in wet forests at 300–4000 ft (91–1219 m) on Kauai and on both ranges of Oahu. Reported from Niihau in 1832.

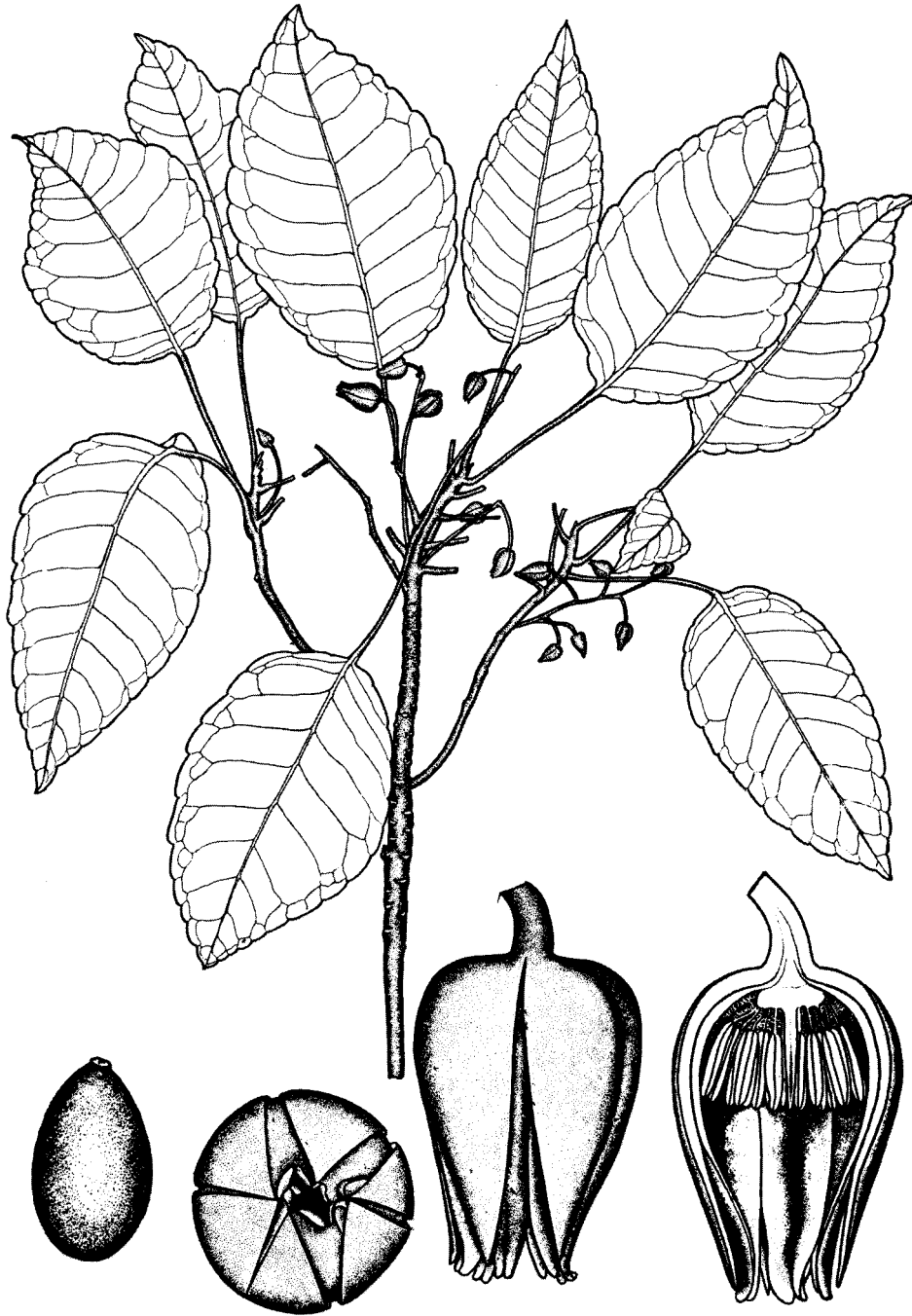
Special areas

Kokee, Waimea Arboretum.

Range

Known only from Kauai and Oahu.

This genus and family are also united within the linden (basswood) family (Tiliaceae).



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Flowering twig (above), 1/2 X; seed (lower left), 1 X; flowers (below), 5 X (Degener).