

## Keahi, Hawaiian nesoluma

*Nesoluma polynesianum* (Hillebr.) Baill.

Sapodilla family (Sapotaceae)

Native species (indigenous)

This evergreen small tree of dry lowland forests, with milky sap and many dark purple or brown fruits like olives, is recognized also by the rusty brown hairs of young foliage, lower leaf surfaces, twigs, and flowers. A small tree to 33 ft (10 m) high and 1 ft (0.3 m) in trunk diameter, with rounded crown of spreading and drooping branches, or a shrub. Bark gray, rough, thick, becoming furrowed into rectangular plates. Twigs long, with raised half-round leaf-scars and round hairy buds and their scars.

Leaves alternate, scattered along twig, with slender leafstalks mostly  $\frac{3}{4}$ – $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches (2–3 cm) long. Blades elliptical,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ – $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches (3–8 cm) long and  $\frac{3}{4}$ –2 inches (2–5 cm) wide, blunt or rounded at both ends, turned under at edges, thick and leathery, upper surface shiny green and hairless, lower surface with pressed rusty brown hairs and often becoming nearly hairless in age.

Flowers many, 1–5 at leaf base or on twig back of leaves on stalks of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm), rusty hairy, fragrant,  $\frac{3}{16}$  inch (5 mm) long and wide, composed of hairy calyx with usually 4–5 (3–6) overlapping pointed lobes; urn-shaped greenish white hairless corolla with short tube usually 7–9 (5–12) pointed, rounded, or toothed lobes; usually 7–9 (5–12) small stamens inserted on base of corolla and opposite lobes; and pistil with elliptical hairy ovary of usually 3–5 (2–6) cells, 1 ovule in each cell, short stout style, and dot stigma.

Fruits (berries) elliptical, many along twigs  $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{5}{8}$  inch (12–15 mm) long and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (10 mm) wide, shiny dark purple or brown, with calyx and base and pointed style at apex, with thin flesh, not edible. Seed single, elliptical or rounded,  $\frac{5}{16}$  inch (8 mm) long, shiny brown, with large rounded scar at base. Fruits many, from May to September.

The hard durable wood apparently has not been used.

Scattered in dry forests through the Hawaiian Islands at 400–2000 ft (122–610 m) altitude. Formerly common, now rare.

### **Special area**

Wahiawa

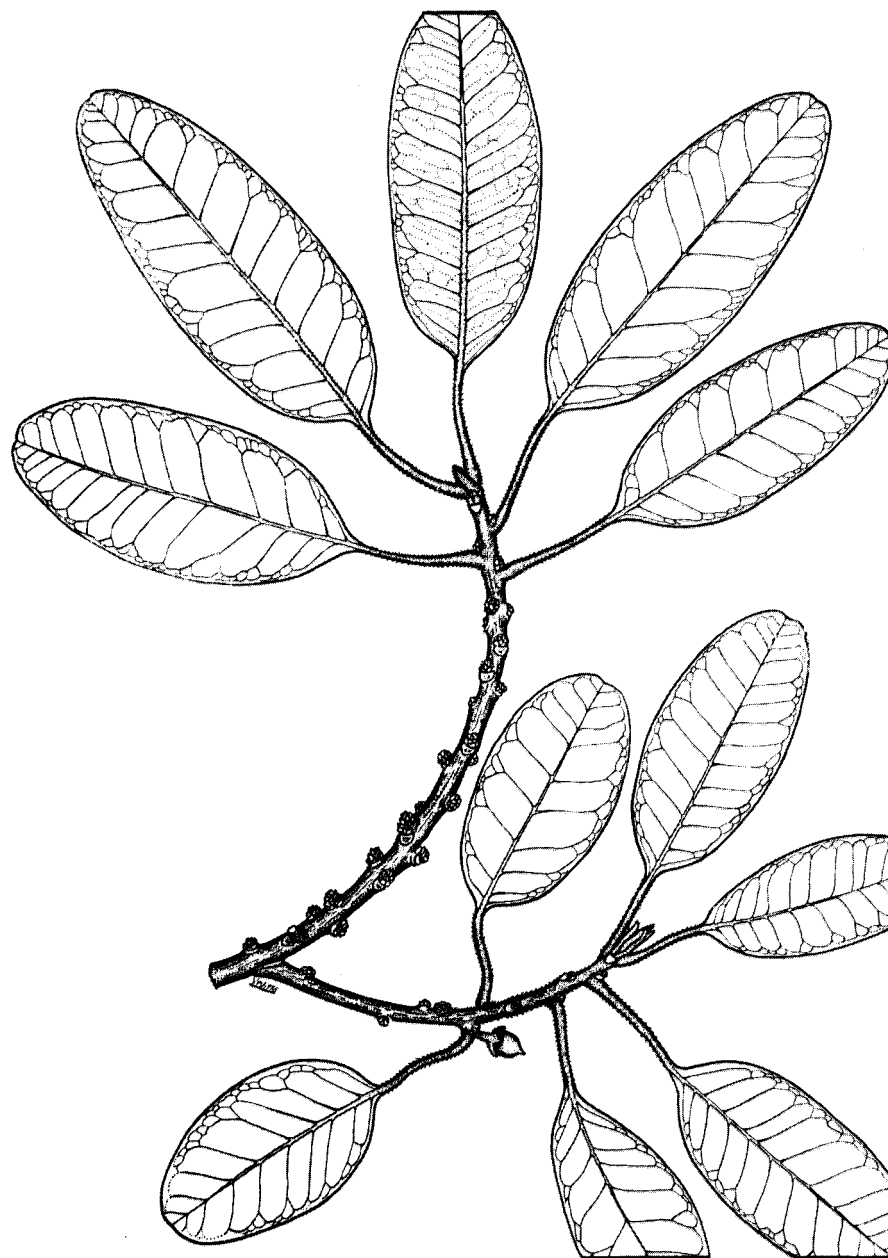
### **Range**

Oahu, Molokai, Maui, Hawaii; also Raivavae, Rapa in South Pacific

### **Botanical synonym**

*Chrysophyllum polynesianum* Hillebr.

This variable species has several named forms generally not distinguished.



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Twig with flower buds and immature fruit,  
½ X (Degener).