

MEKA RĀKAU

Harakeke

(Common Flax)

Phormium tenax

Sparklers



Characteristics

Harakeke are super versatile. This rākau is one of the most ancient plant species. People have been working with harakeke for as long as there has been people in Aotearoa.

Harakeke supports people to make textiles, strings, lines, bags, and mats.



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The strong leaves of harakeke aren't only multifunctional for human use!

Animals such as tūī, bellbirds, tīeke, geckos, and insects use harakeke for both shelter and food.

Māori have harvested this plant for hundreds of years to create clothing, baskets, rope, and many other vital supplies.

Do you have many talents like the harakeke?

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Fun fact!

European traders called this rākau a flax plant, since it looked similar to flax from their homelands.

Despite flax being a common name for harakeke, this plant is actually a lily!



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**What can we learn from
harakeke?**

**How might we apply
this in our classroom?**

