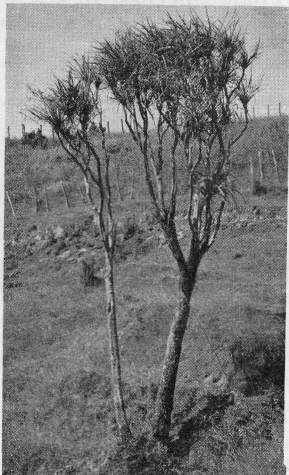


Cordyline Hybrids in the Northern Tararuas

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THREE species of *Cordyline* occur on the northern tip of the Tararua Range in the Woodville and Kairanga Counties: *C. indivisa* is known to me in this area by only one individual; *C. banksii* is a plant of the middle stages of forest regeneration and occurs widely in scrub and on roadsides; *C. australis*, the common cabbage tree, is seen mainly on the Manawatu Plains, but its distribution overlaps that of *C. banksii* in altitudes between 300 and 1,000 ft. In this region of overlap about one-half of the specimens cannot be ascribed strictly to one species or the other, but have the features of both or are intermediate (see cover). A few resemble neither parent; the leaves on the plant shown on this page are shorter and narrower than for either parent.

Growth form varies more widely than any other feature. The whole gradation occurs between the slender, relatively smooth trunk of *C. banksii* and the stouter, fissured trunk of *C. australis*. The long, broad leaves with prominent veins and tubular "petiole" separate *C. banksii* from *C. australis*, but the hybrids generally lie between the two parents in shape, size and form of the leaves. The inflorescence of *C. banksii* is nearly twice as long as that of *C. australis* and the primary branches are placed at correspondingly wider intervals from each other along the central axis and from the base of the inflorescence. *C. banksii* has one primary branch at each node and two or three minor ones. These minor branches are lacking in *C. australis*, but appeared on the upper nodes of all the hybrids examined.



C. banksii x *australis*, an uncommon form (see text).

Table Comparing Leaves and Inflorescences of *Cordyline australis*, *C. banksii* and Three Hybrids.

	<i>C. australis</i>	<i>C. banksii</i>	Hybrid I	Hybrid 2 (Cover)	Hybrid 3
LEAVES:					
Max. length (in.)	29	58	38	34	33
Max. width (in.)	1½	2¼	2	2	1¾
Lower portion	flat with recurved margins	tubular with margins almost meeting upwards	shallowly channelled (1/6 in. deep), margins recurved	shallowly channelled (1/5 in. deep), margins upcurved	shallowly channelled (1/8 in. deep), margins flat
Midrib and lateral veins	midrib not evident and all veins of equal prominence	midrib prominent, flat above, rounded beneath; 6-7 lateral veins more prominent than others	midrib prominent, raised above, channelled beneath; 4-5 lateral veins more prominent than others	midrib prominent, raised above, channelled beneath; all veins equally prominent	midrib prominent, raised above, channelled beneath; 3-4 lateral veins more prominent than others
INFLORESCENCE:					
Max. length (in.)	34	60	42	46	48
Branch intervals—distance from base of inflorescence (in.)	9, 11½, 12½, 14¼, 15¼	26, 31, 34, 38½, 39½	14, 19½, 23, 25½, 27	14, 21, 24, 26, 27½	9, 16, 18½, 22, 24
Branches per node	1	1 major, 2-3 minor	1 below, 2 above	1 below, 2 above	1 below, 2-3 above
Max. length of primary branch (in.)	13	22	12	15	19
Max. length of secondary branch (in.)	7	12	7½	7	10