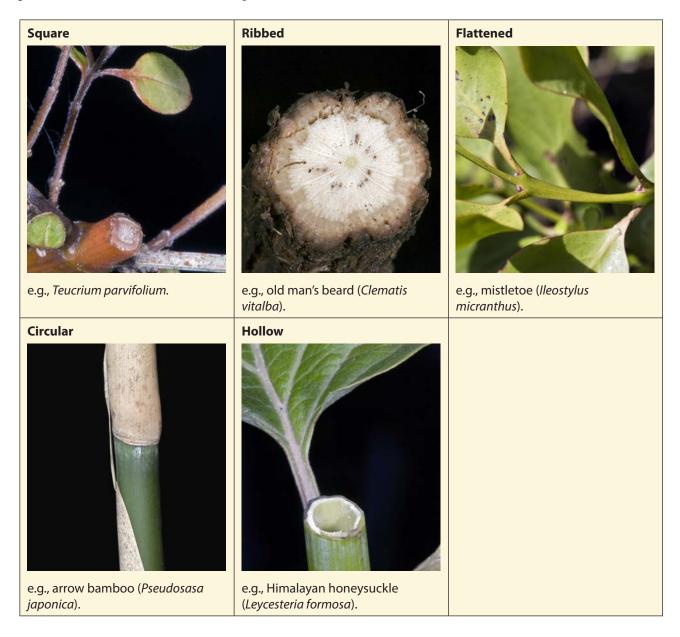
10. Stem and bark

The stem or trunk of a plant can be in various forms such as square, round or hollow. The mint family and related puriri family also have square or 4-angled stems. In some species only the young shoots are square, e.g., *Neomyrtus pedunculata*. Below are some stem shapes:



The surfaces of stems or trunks, including the bark of woody plants, also have many forms including fibrous, hammer marked, hairy or stringy. Stem and bark surfaces are shown below:

Smooth (glabrous)	Succulent	Rough	Papery
Smooth exposed epidermis.	Soft, mucilaginous.	Coarse and scratchy to touch.	Thin, dry and flaking.
e.g., fennel (<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>).	e.g., Crassula sieberiana.	e.g., black maire (<i>Nestegis cunninghamii</i>).	e.g., kōtukutuku (Fuchsia excorticata).
Prickly/thorny	Hairy (hirsute)	Grooved	Stringy
	Fine or soft hairs.	Generally vertical or	Long, stringy serrations
		spiralled striations.	on the bark or stem.
e.g., matagouri (<i>Discaria</i>			

It is interesting to compare the trunk and bark features of the "big five" podocarps: rimu, kahikatea, tōtara, mataī, miro (see the pictures below).



Bark of the five podocarps, from left: rimu, kahikatea, tōtara, mataī, miro.