

Veronica baylyi

COMMON NAME

Red Hills hebe

SYNONYMS

Veronica laevis var. *carnosula* Hook.f., *Veronica carnosula* (Hook.f.) Hook.f.; *Hebe carnosula* (Hook.f.) Cockayne,

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica baylyi Garn.-Jones

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

HEBCAR

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing bushy shrub with erect branches bearing pairs of thick dished blue-green oval leaves inhabiting ultramafic areas of the northern South Island. Leaves 6.2-12.3mm long by 4.4-7.4mm wide. Leaf bud with small pointed gap between leaves at base. Flowers white, in a spike to 3cm long.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Mt Dun and Red Hills).

HABITAT

Montane to alpine in sparse *Chionochloa defracta* Connor dominated grassland, ultramafic boulder field and talus slopes, and under short, sparse scrub.



Red Hills Ridge, Marlborough. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 08/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Red Hills Ridge, Marlborough. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 08/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Spreading low or bushy shrub to 0.6 m tall. Branches erect, old stems dark grey, brown or black; branchlets brown or red-brown, pubescent. Leaf bud distinct; sinus small and acute. Leaves erect to patent; lamina elliptic or obovate, coriaceous, concave, 6.2-12.3 × 4.4-9.1 mm; apex obtuse or subacute; base cuneate or truncate; midrib thickened below (sometimes weakly), sometimes evident on the undersides of fresh leaves; margin minutely papillate; upper surface light to dark olive-green, glaucous or glaucescent, dull with many stomata, glabrous; lower surface olive-green, glaucous or glaucescent; petiole 1.0-1.5 mm, glabrous, rarely hairy along margins especially near base. Inflorescences with 6-22 flowers, usually lateral, rarely terminal, unbranched 12-30 mm long; peduncle 6-9 mm; rachis 13-25 mm. Bracts alternate or opposite, ovate or lanceolate, obtuse, subacute or acuminate. Flowers hermaphrodite or female on different plants. Pedicels absent or always shorter than bracts, 0-0.8 mm. Calyx 1.8-2.5 mm, 4-5-lobed, lobes elliptic, obtuse. Corolla tube glabrous; 1.2-1.7 × 1.9-2.1 mm, shortly cylindric, = or > calyx; lobes white, elliptic, narrowly elliptic, or ovate, obtuse, patent or recurved, > corolla tube. Stamen filaments 1.7-5.2 mm; anthers magenta, 1.7-1.8 mm. Ovary narrowly ovoid, sometimes sparsely hairy toward apex, c.1.2-1.3 mm; styles 5.0-5.7 mm. Capsules obtuse or subacute, 3.0-4.5 × 2.6-3.0 mm, glabrous or minutely hairy, loculicidal split extending $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ way to base.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other New Zealand *Veronica* (subgenus *Hebe*) species by the restriction to ultramafic rock habitats, glaucous to glaucescent leaves (on both surfaces); an acute leaf bud sinus; simple rather than branched inflorescences; and inflorescence bracts which do not overtop the calyces.

FLOWERING

November - April

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

January - April

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Results varying in cultivation, some people finding it easy to grow and others difficult. Can be difficult to strike from cuttings.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted endemic which is sparse to locally abundant within its ultramafic habitat. There are no known threats to the species, although wilding pines pose a long term risk to the Red Hills vegetation as a whole.

ETYMOLOGY

veronica: Named after Saint Veronica, who gave Jesus her veil to wipe his brow as he carried the cross through Jerusalem, perhaps because the common name of this plant is 'speedwell'. The name Veronica is often believed to derive from the Latin vera 'truth' and iconica 'image', but it is actually derived from the Macedonian name Berenice which means 'bearer of victory'.

baylyi: Name for Michael Bayly (1970-) from Melbourne, Victoria, Australia who undertook his post doctorate in New Zealand revising what was then considered to be plants in the genus *Hebe* (Bayly & Kellow 2006).

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by Peter J. de Lange (4 August 2006). Description modified from Bayly and Kellow (2006).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Bayly, M.; Kellow, A. 2006: An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Te Papa Press, Wellington.

Thorsen, M.J.; Dickinson, K.J.M.; Seddon, P.J. 2009: Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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