

# Veronica insularis

## COMMON NAME

Three Kings koromiko

## SYNONYMS

*Hebe insularis* (Cheeseman) Cockayne et Allan

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Veronica insularis* (Cheeseman) Cockayne et Allan

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40 (+fragment)

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, RR

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2004 | Range Restricted

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing shrub bearing pairs of oval leathery blueish leaves inhabiting the Three Kings Islands. Leaves to 33mm long by 14mm wide. Leaf bud sometimes with tiny gap between leaf pairs at base. Flowers white to purple, in branched sprays to 4cm long at the tips of twigs.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to the Three Kings Islands, northern New Zealand, where it is known from West, South West, Great and North East islands.

## HABITAT

It grows on rock outcrops and cliffs, especially near the coast.



Dec 2006. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange,  
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Dec 2006. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange,  
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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Spreading low shrub to 0.5(-1) m tall. Branches decumbent or erect or sometimes pendent, old stems brown; branchlets red-brown, densely pubescent, hairs uniform to bifarious; internodes (1-)4-10.5 mm; leaf decurrencies evident (usually with  $\pm$  faint ridges running along medial line and margins, with a shallow groove forming between the decurrencies of a leaf pair). Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent, or small and rounded to narrow and acute. Leaves erectopatent to patent (usually) or recurved; lamina elliptic (usually) or slightly obovate, coriaceous or fleshy, flat or slightly concave, 7.5-32.5 x 3.7-13.5 mm; apex subacute or obtuse; margin ciliolate or glabrous; upper surface green to dark green and often slightly glaucous or glaucescent, dull, with many stomata, glabrous (usually) or hairy along midrib; lower surface green, glabrous (usually) or hairy along midrib; petiole glabrous (usually) or hairy along margins or above. Inflorescences with 7-46 flowers, lateral, with 3 or more branches, 2.2-4 cm, longer than (usually) or about equal to subtending leaves (rarely); peduncle 0.7-1.7 cm; rachis 1.2-2.8 cm. Bracts opposite and decussate below and becoming alternate above, deltoid (sometimes narrowly) or ovate or lanceolate, obtuse to acute. Flowers hermaphrodite. Pedicels 0.5-5.5 mm. Calyx 2- 4 mm, with anterior lobes free for most of their length (mostly) or united 1/3-2/3-way to apex (degree of fusion of anterior lobes varies on one inflorescence); lobes lanceolate or ovate, obtuse to acute, eglandular ciliate (almost always) or with mixed eglandular and occasional glandular cilia. Corolla tube glabrous, 2.9-4 x 2.2-3 mm, funnelform and contracted at base, longer than calyx; lobes white or tinged mauve at anthesis (often almost purple when young), broadly ovate, obtuse, suberect to recurved, longer than or equalling corolla tube. Stamen filaments 4.8 - 6.5 mm; anthers magenta, 1.8- 2.2 mm. Ovary approximately 0.9-1.1 mm; ovules 12-29 per locule, marginal on a flattened placenta (but usually recurved and appearing somewhat scattered), in 1- 3 layers; style 3.5-7.2 mm. Capsules subacute or obtuse, 2.5- 4.5 x 2-3 mm, septicidal split sometimes extending only  $\frac{3}{4}$ -way to base, loculicidal split extending  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ -way to base. Seeds flattened,  $\pm$  ellipsoid, finely papillate, pale brown, 1- 1.2 x 0.6-0.8 mm, MR 0.2-0.3 mm.

## FLOWERING

November-December(-February)

## FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, White

## FRUITING

December-March(-August)

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## 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'.

**insularis:** From the Latin insula 'island, pertaining to or growing on islands

## TAXONOMI OC NOTES

A distinctive species recognised by the combination of: leathery, elliptic to obovate leaves, which are often  $\pm$  glaucous or glaucescent; and branched inflorescences. The leaf bud sinus is either small or absent. Specimens show some variation in the degree of hairiness of leaves and branchlets. It is the only *Veronica* recorded from the Three Kings Islands.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Bayly & Kellow (2006)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006 An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 260  
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**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-insularis/>