

Veronica adamsii

COMMON NAME

Adams's koromiko

SYNONYMS

Hebe adamsii (Cheeseman) Cockayne et Allan

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica adamsii Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 80

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, OL

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL, DP, St

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low bushy shrub with narrow pointed pairs of leaves and short spikes of white (occasionally purple) flowers inhabiting the northern tip of the North Island. Leaves widest towards base, to 100mm long by 10-18mm wide. Leaf bud with small gap at base. Flower spikes to 15cm long. Fruit dry, flattened.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Te Paki (Unuwhao Bush))

HABITAT

A lithophyte confined to sparsely vegetated, exposed cliff, bluff and rock outcrops within lowland/coastal forest. It is often found growing in and around clumps of *Astelia banksii* A.Cunn.



Hebe adamsii habitat, Unuwhao Bluffs, April 1995. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Tarure Hill, Unuwhao Bush, Te Paki. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low spreading shrub up to 1 m tall. Old stems grey-brown; branchlets yellowish brown, drying dark, glabrous or minutely puberulent when young; internodes 3–10× diameter. Leaf bud usually with small rounded sinus, sometimes sinus absent. Leaves erecto-patent to patent; lamina lanceolate to narrowly elliptic, coriaceous, glossy bronze green above, slightly duller beneath, 30–100 × 7–28 mm, glabrous except for minute glands and short eglandular hairs on midrib above, young leaves sometimes ciliolate or minutely glandular along margins; apex subacute to acute; base abruptly narrowed to short ciliolate petiole; margin entire, glabrous, pale, weakly bevelled. Inflorescences lateral, racemose, 50–150 mm long; flowers distant, spiralled. Peduncle and rachis with minute spreading eglandular hairs; peduncle 10–30 mm long. Bracts linear, acute, ciliolate, usually shorter than or equalling pedicels, rarely longer. Pedicels erecto-patent to spreading, 2.5–4.0 mm long. Flowers weakly turpentine-scented, protandrous. Calyx lobes broadly ovate, acuminate, overlapping at edges, 3.0 × 1.5–2.0 mm; outer surface with scattered minute sessile glands; margin eglandular- and glandular-ciliolate. Corolla pale pinkish mauve, fading dirty white; tube 2.5–4.0 mm long, broad and rounded at base, puberulent inside; lobes suberect, ovate to lanceolate, subauriculate at base, acute, 4.0–5.0 × 2.5–4.0 mm. Anthers pale mauve, acute, 2.5 mm long; filaments pinkish mauve, fading white, 6–7 mm long, curving outwards after dehiscence. Nectarial disk glabrous, fleshy, dark green. Style white, glabrous, 6–7 mm long; stigma subcapitate. Ovary cylindrical, glabrous, 1.0–1.2 × 0.8 mm. Capsule ovoid, acute, pale brown, 4.5–6.0 × 3.5–4.0 mm, septicidal to base, loculicidal to ½. Seeds brown, elliptic to subcircular, strongly flattened, smooth, 2.0–2.5 × 1.5–2.0 mm

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *Veronica macrocarpa* a species with which it is allopatric, and from which it differs by its low spreading habit, smaller bronze-green rather than yellow-green leaves, usually more distant flowers, pointed flower buds, acute rather than rounded corolla lobes, and shorter corolla tube. *Veronica adamsii* has some superficial similarity to *V. perbella* another allopatric species, which is diploid ($2n = 40$) rather than tetraploid ($2n = 80$), is a larger plant, with narrow leaves, without a leaf bud sinus, and has flowers with a much shorter corolla tube and distinctly more acute corolla lobes than is usual for *V. adamsii*.

FLOWERING

(January-) March - September (- December) - often has two peaks, March and September.

FLOWER COLOURS

Lavender, White

FRUITING

Fruit may be found throughout the year.

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easy from semi-hardwood cuttings. Fresh seed, when available, germinates well.

THREATS

A comprehensive survey in April 1991 located c.700 adult plants in two main areas within Unuwahao Bush. The species is naturally uncommon because there is very little open bluff habitat available for it to colonise. The main threat, feral goats were removed in January 1991. However, all the known populations are on private land. Currently the steep nature of its habitat and the Waahi Tapu status of Unuwahao Bush protects this species from major land use changes.

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'.

adamsii: Named for James Adams (1839-1906) an exceptional amateur botanist who established the Thames High School. In 1906 he died suddenly whilst still the headmaster of the high school. He is buried in the Tararu Cemetery, Thames. James Adams was a friend of the first Auckland Museum Director Thomas Cheeseman whom he often accompanied in the field. Cheeseman commemorated Adams contributions to New Zealand Botany with the species *Brachyglottis adamsii*, *Celmisia adamsii*, and *Trilepidea adamsii*. His granddaughter was Jacqueline Nancy Adams (1926-2007) botanical illustrator, artist, botanist and phycologist whose name is also commemorated by a number of marine seaweeds.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (12 August 2005): Description from Garnock-Jones and Clarkson (1991)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Clarkson, B.D. 1991: *Hebe adamsii* and *H. murrellii* (Scrophulariaceae) reinstated. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 32 : 11-15

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-adamsii/>