

Veronica americana

COMMON NAMES

American brooklime, American speedwell

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Spreading perennial herb up to 30 cm tall with opposite shortly stalked leaves and small (c. 1 cm across) blue flowers.

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial growing from shallow creeping rhizomes, hairless throughout, with erect, ascending or trailing, simple stems 10-60 cm long. Leaves: opposite, glossy, all shortly stalked, evidently with small saw-teeth to almost entire, lanceolate to lance-ovate or narrowly almost triangular, or the lower more elliptic, mostly 1.5-8 cm long, 0.6-3 cm wide, generally 2-4 times as long as wide, or the lower a little wider. Flowers: many in long-stalked, open, elongated clusters, mostly 10- to 25-flowered, from upper leaf axils. Corolla 5-10 mm wide, blue or pale violet to almost white, with 4 broad lobes and 2 spreading stamens. Style 2.5-3.5 mm long. Flower stalks in fruit spreading, 5-14 mm long. Fruits: capsule, swollen, 3 mm high and about as wide or slightly wider, scarcely notched. Seeds numerous, 0.5 mm long or less.

SIMILAR TAXA

V. americana is distinguished from the other spp of *Veronica* by its strongly toothed leaves that occur on stalks.

DISTRIBUTION

Common in the Waikato, Bay of Plenty, and scattered in the southern North Island, Canterbury and Westland.

HABITAT

Margins of flowing water bodies, seeps

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica americana Benth

ENDEMIC GENUS

No



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ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

FRUITING

Autumn

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

North America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Probably a soil seed contaminant or contaminant of ornamental pond plants

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

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'.

americana: Of South America

NVS CODE

VERAME

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026