Veronica amplexicaulis f. amplexicaulis

COMMON NAMES
hebe

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT
Jump to previous conservation statuses

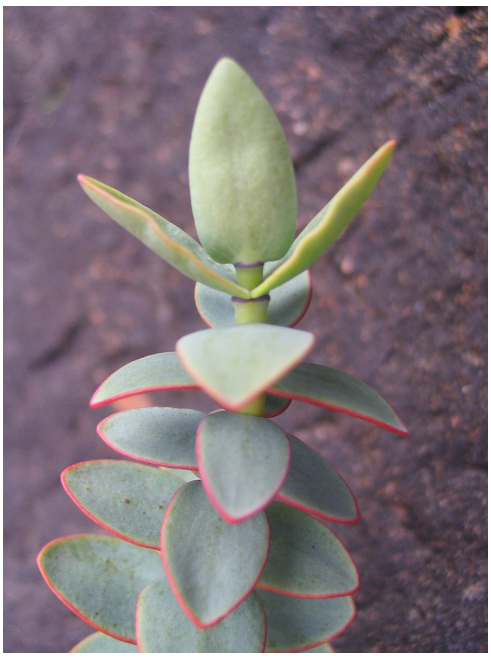
CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Low bushy shrub with blue-green oval pairs of leaves which clasp the stem at their base and with very short (to 5cm long) spikes of white flowers inhabiting inland south Canterbury. Leaves broad, with reddish margin, 12-21mm long. Leaf bud with no gap at base.

FLOWER COLOURS
Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Small to medium-sized shrubs, branching from the base. Stems trailing to erect, naked except near apex, sparingly branched, glabrous or sometimes with a few hairs near leaf bases, 150-600 mm long. Leaves oblong, spreading, glaucous, glabrous, amplexicaul or abruptly narrowed to broad base, 10-30 × 5-15 mm; apex obtuse, rarely acute; margins red or green. Inflorescence a dense simple spike, peduncle hairy, 20-25 mm. Flowers sessile. Bracts and calyx lobes about equal, 2.0-2.5 mm, ciliate or pubescent all over, broadly ovate, subacute. Corolla white, tube exceeding calyx, lobes narrow. Anthers purple. Capsule ovoid, rounded at apex, narrowly latiseptate, pubescent, very dark brown, about equalling calyx; valves thick walled.



Hebe amplexicaulis f. amplexicaulis, Mt Somers. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Hebe amplexicaulis f. amplexicaulis. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 27/12/2012, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
Similar to Veronica pareora from which it is distinguished by its usually shorter stems, smaller leaves, pubescent peduncles, and usually non-pedicellate flowers (some plants in the upper Rangitata area have inflorescences whose basal flowers are pedicellate). Veronica amplexicaulis f. amplexicaulis differs from V. amplexicaulis f. hirta by its glabrous leaves and mostly glabrous branchlets

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (south Canterbury (Mt Somers, Mt Peel, Four Peaks Range and Orari Gorge).

HABITAT
Low montane to subalpine (mostly subalpine). A rupestral of steep-sided rock outcrops – where it grows in joints and crevices, gorges and more rarely boulder falls

THREATS
Not Threatened. A Naturally Uncommon, range restricted and sparsely distributed plant which is widespread but never particularly common within its few known habitats. Some populations may be threatened by browsing animals.

GENUS
Veronica

FAMILY
Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY
Veronica amplexicaulis J.B.Armstr. f. amplexicaulis

SYNONYMS
Hebe amplexicaulis var. erecta Cockayne et Allan, Hebe amplexicaulis var. suberecta Cockayne et Allan, Hebe amplexicaulis (J.B.Armstr.) Cockayne et Allan f. amplexicaulis

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
October - January (-March)

FRUITING
January - December

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from cuttings and fresh seed. Prefers a sunny site and should be planted in a free draining soil. Dislikes humidity

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available.

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’.
amplexicaulis: From the Latin amplexus ‘clasped’ and caulis ‘stem’ or ‘stalk’, meaning stem-clasping

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 40

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp
2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp
2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2004 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Molloy, B.P.J. 1982: Polymorphism and the taxonomic status of the *Hebe amplexicaulis* complex (Scrophulariaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany 20*: 391-399.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by Peter J. de Lange (18 August 2006): Description from Garnock-Jones and Molloy (1982)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-amplexicaulis-f-amplexicaulis/

PDF DATE

25 August 2026