

# Veronica anagallis-aquatica

## COMMON NAME

water speedwell

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Veronica anagallis-aquatica* L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

VERANA

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Sprawling perennial herb up to 1 m tall with opposite stalkless leaves and small (c. 7 mm across) pale blue or mauve flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Maybe locally abundant in the North and South Island.

## HABITAT

Grows in shallow water or wet soil along slow-moving streams and ditches.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Fibrous-rooted, perennial plant, more or less erect, 20-100 cm tall, hairless throughout, or slightly glandular-short-hairy among the flowers. Leaves opposite, mostly elliptic or elliptic-ovate to elliptic-oblong, stalkless and mostly clasping, mostly 2-10cm long and 0.7-5 cm wide, 1.5-3 times as long as wide, sharply saw-toothed to entire. Sterile, autumnal shoots have more rounded and stalked leaves. Flowers many in elongated, long-stalked clusters from leaf axils. Sepals highly variable in form and size. Corolla pale blue to mauve with darker nerves, 5-7 mm wide. The flower stalks in fruit generally strongly ascending, or upcurved, 3-8 mm long. Fruit a capsule swollen, 2.5-4 mm across, scarcely notched, about as high as wide, or a little higher, the style 1.5-2.5 mm long. Seeds numerous, 0.5 mm long or less

## SIMILAR TAXA

*V. anagallis-aquatica* is similar to other aquatic *Veronica* spp., but is generally much larger, with pale blue flowers and stalkless.

## FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

## FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple



*Veronica anagallis-aquatica* - Waikato Heads.  
Photographer: Mike Wilcox, Date taken: 07/09/2004, Licence: All rights reserved.



Paekakariki Motor Camp. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Date taken: 01/02/2011, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## FRUITING

Autumn

## YEAR NATURALISED

1853

## ORIGIN

Temperate Eurasia, may also be native to the US

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Probably a soil seed contaminant or contaminant of ornamental pond plants

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not usually controlled in New Zealand, but may be controlled manually, or mechanically.

## 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'.

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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