

# Veronica catenata

## COMMON NAME

pink water speedwell

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

Veronica catenata Pennel

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

VERCAT

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Sprawling perennial herb up to 25 cm tall with opposite stalkless leaves and small (c. 7 mm across) pink to pinkish white flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Canterbury

## HABITAT

Shallow water, swamps and margins of waterways.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Fibrous-rooted, perennial plant, sprawling to erect c. 25 cm tall, hairless throughout, or slightly glandular-short-hairy among the flowers. Stems often purplish in colour. Leaves opposite, mostly linear to lanceolate, stalkless and mostly clasping, 1.5-7 (9) cm x 0.3-2 (2.5) cm wide, shallowly toothed to entire. Flowers many in elongated, long-stalked clusters from leaf axils. Sepals highly variable in form and size. Corolla pink or pinkish white 5-7 mm wide. Fruit a capsule almost round 3 mm across. Seeds numerous, 0.5 mm long or less.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *V. anagallis*-aquatic but *V. catenata* is smaller with much narrower leaves, the flowers stalk is more spreading, and the flowers are pink.

## FLOWERING

Summer - autumn

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

## FRUITING

Autumn

## YEAR NATURALISED

1944

## ORIGIN

Temperate Eurasia, North America



## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Probably a soil seed contaminant or contaminant of ornamental pond plants

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

## 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).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

## MORE INFORMATION

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