

Veronica decora

COMMON NAMES

parahebe

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White



McKerrow Range, Otago. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 10/12/2012, Licence: CC BY-NC.



McKerrow Range, Otago. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 10/12/2012, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Subshrub 10-30 mm tall. Old stems brown to grey. Branches prostrate or decumbent. Branchlets red-brown to black. Vegetative internodes 0.5-15.0 mm long. Stem pubescence uniform or bifarious (rarely), eglandular pubescent (hairs curly). Leaves decussate, spreading to recurved. Lamina obovate to orbicular or lyrate, 1.5-5.0 × 1.0-5.0 mm. Upper surface of leaves green to dark green (often red-tinged), glossy. Under surface of leaves pale green or pinkish, dull. Leaf hairs sparse or rarely numerous, along margins, or on petiole or on upper surface or on under surface (rarely), eglandular, curly. Apex rounded. Base cuneate. Margin glabrous, crenate or lobed. Marginal teeth or lobes in 1(-2) pairs. Petiole 0.5-1.5 mm long. Inflorescence racemose, unbranched, 60-250 mm long at fruiting, with 3-20 flowers. Indumentum of peduncle, rachis, and pedicels absent to moderately dense. Eglandular hairs of inflorescence antrorse, white. Peduncle 40-150 long, glabrous to eglandular-pubescent; hairs all around peduncle. Rachis 2-100 mm long, eglandular-pubescent, hairs all around rachis. Bracts alternate to alternate but with a basal whorl of 3, obtuse to subacute, eglandular ciliate (especially near base), lanceolate to elliptic. Bract margins entire. Pedicels erectopatent at anthesis to suberect at anthesis, straight at fruiting, 2-10 mm long, glabrous or eglandular-puberulent; hairs all around pedicel. Flowers: Calyx 4-lobed, 2-3 mm long. Calyx lobes oblanceolate to obovate, acute to subacute. Calyx hairs on margins only, mixed eglandular and glandular. Calyx lobe margins entire. Corolla white at anthesis or pink at anthesis. Nectar guides evident, confined to posterior corolla lobe or present on posterior and lateral corolla lobes. Colour ring and nectar guides magenta. Corolla throat yellow. Corolla 6-12 mm diameter. Corolla tube 1 mm long, 1 mm wide, hairy inside, hairs short. Corolla lobes glabrous. Posterior corolla lobe circular, obtuse, 3-6 × 3-7 mm. Lateral corolla lobes circular to elliptic, obtuse, longitudinally folded around stamens, 4.0-4.5 × 3.5-4.0 mm. Anterior corolla lobe oblong to linear, obtuse, 4-5 × 1-2 mm. Stamen filaments white, 3-4(-5) mm long, narrowed at base. Anthers white or pink or magenta, 0.9-1.2 mm long. Nectarial disc ciliate. Ovary ellipsoid, obtuse, glabrous, 1.0-1.5 mm long. Style 3.0-4.0 mm long. Stigma 0.15 mm wide. Capsules weakly flattened, emarginate, 4.0-4.5 × 3.0-4.0 mm, 2-2.5(-3) mm thick, glabrous. Septicidal split of capsule extending to base. Loculicidal split of capsule extending $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ way to base. Seeds strongly flattened, smooth-surfaced, ellipsoid to discoid, straw yellow to pale brown, 0.8-0.9 × 0.6-0.8 mm

SIMILAR TAXA

Veronica decora is easily recognised by its prostrate habit, very dark stems, small glossy dark green leaves (usually with only one pair of crenations), uniform stem pubescence, and stout, tall, erect racemes with the three lowermost flowers often in a whorl. It

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island(Nelson, eastern Marlborough, Canterbury, Otago, to Southland).

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine, Usually found on rubbly ground such as braided riverbeds, screes, moraines, stony ground and in stone-strewn grassland

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica decora (Ashwin) Garn.-Jones

SYNONYMS

Parahebe decora Ashwin

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September - December

FRUITING

November - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from cuttings, rooted pieces and fresh seed.

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'.

decora: Beautiful

NVS CODE

VERDEC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 40$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Lloyd, D.G. 2003: A taxonomic revision of *Parahebe* (Plantaginaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 181-232

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (5 October 2006). Description adapted from Garnock-Jones and Lloyd (2003).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026