Veronica densifolia

COMMON NAMES
Hebejeebie

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
Blue, Violet/Purple

Remarkables Range. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 22/12/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

Remarkables Range. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 22/12/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial, rigid, tightly (to loosely) compacted low-growing subshrub with many ascending to erect branches arising from woody horizontal stem 1–5mm thick; 2–5 mm high. Branches 4.0–100.0 × 2.7–13.0 mm, glabrous or sometimes densely hairy. Leaves decussate, imbricate, tightly appressed to suberect with internodes of varying lengths, sessile, olive to medium green, or brown, rust or yellow especially near margins, becoming light green, light brown and/or purple near the base, widest at or below middle, 1.95–6.36 × 0.69–2.97 mm, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, triangular, rarely narrowly obovate or trilobed, with obtuse to subacute apex, entire (rarely bi- or trilobed) with concave curvature, often keeled, and with thickened recurved upper margins. Leaf trichomes eglandular and unicellular, and sometimes also glandular and multicellular, 0.1–0.9 mm long. Leaf inner surface glabrous, sometimes appearing punctate. Leaf outer surface glabrous and papillate upper half, sometimes densely punctate. Leaf margins with isolated trichomes or sparsely ciliate on lower ¼ to ½, glabrous on upper ½ to ¾. Bracts 2, 3.34–5.48 × 0.83–2.01 mm, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, rarely oblanceolate or narrowly lanceolate, sometimes concave and keeled, with thickened recurved upper margins, and obtuse to subacute apex. Bract trichomes eglandular and unicellular, sometimes also glandular and multicellular, 0.1–0.6 mm long. Bract inner surface glabrous. Bract outer surface papillate and glabrous, but bases sometimes densely hairy. Bract margins with isolated trichomes or densely ciliate on lower ½ to ≣ of margins, glabrous above. Flowers solitary, sessile, axillary near branch tips. Calyx 3.95–7.40 mm long, persistent around capsule. Calyx lobes divided equally ½ to ¾ to base, 2.75–5.80 × 0.91–2.31 mm, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, rarely ovate or oblanceolate, with obtuse to subacute apex. Calyx lobe trichomes eglandular and unicellular, sometimes also glandular and multicellular, 0.1–0.6 mm long. Calyx lobe inner surface glabrous and papillate, rarely with isolated eglandular hairs on upper ½. Calyx lobes glabrous on outer surface, or with isolated or densely distributed trichomes on lower ½ to ¾, sometimes base of calyx also hairy. Calyx lobe margins with isolated trichomes or densely ciliate on lower ½ to 2/3, glabrous above. Corolla mauve, pale purple, or blue, 4.50–12.46 × 2.51–15.44 wide, funnel-form. Corolla tube shorter than or equal to calyx, 2.13–5.89 × 1.10–6.01mm. Corolla lobes 2.60–8.35 × 1.94–5.79 mm suberect to spreading, narrowly to broadly obovate, spathulate, with obtuse apex. Filaments 2, 1.16–4.27mm long. Anthers 1.02–1.98 × 0.58–1.35. Style 3.07–7.40mm long, included to about mid-petal lobe. Stigma 0.15–0.37mm wide, capitate, sometimes flattened. Ovary 0.64–1.58 × 0.47–0.93 mm, glabrous. Nectary disc 0.20–0.33 mm high. Capsule laterally compressed, bilobed, with septicidal and loculicidal dehiscence, 2.75–5.14 × 1.68–4.25 mm, 1.23–1.98 mm thick, glabrous. Seeds up to 46 per capsule, 0.52–1.13 × 0.27–0.84 mm wide.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily distinguished from other allied New Zealand *Veronica* species by the subshrub growth habit, decussate, imbricate leaves; leaves that are widest below middle, concave and often keeled, with thickened minutely papillate on the upper margin, and which have the leaf hairs that are usually 1 mm long.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigneous; New Zealand: South Island (throughout).
Also present in Australia.

HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine, in fellfield, tussock-grassland, on snow banks amongst rubble, in damp crevices on rock tors and outcrops, in areas of snow melt and inhabiting moist peaty hollows.

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica densifolia (F.Muell.) F.Muell.

SYNONYMS

Paederota densifolia F.Muell., Chionohebe densifolia (F.Muell.) B.G.Briggs et Ehrend.; Pygmea tetragona (Hook.f.) Ashwin; Logania tetragona Hook.f.; Veronica dasyphylla Kirk; Hebe dasyphylla (Kirk) Cockayne et Allan; Hebejeebie densifolia (F.Muell.) Heads

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
(October-) November - January

FRUITING
Throughout the year

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Seeds are dispersed by ballistic projection, wind and water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown in a rock garden or pot. In fact it is the only species that has proved reasonably suited to widespread cultivation. However, it rarely flowers at low elevations and dislikes humidity and drought.

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'.

NVS CODE
VERDEN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 42

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 | Qualifiers: TL 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
Meudt, H.M. 2008: Taxonomic revision of Australasian snow hebes (*Veronica*, Plantaginaceae). *Australian Systematic Botany 21*: 387–421.
Thorsen, M.J.; Dickinson, K.J.M.; Seddon, P.J. 2009: Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 11*: 285-309.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet by Peter J. de Lange (5 January 2009). Description from Meudt (2008).

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-densifolia/

PDF DATE
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