

Veronica evenosa

COMMON NAMES

hebe

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Rounded much-branched bushy shrub bearing pairs of shiny green oval leaves and with round-tipped leaf buds inhabiting Tararua mountains. Leaves 12-28mm long by 4-9mm wide, margin with very small hairs (lens needed). Leaf bud without gap at base. Flower spike to 5cm long.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub (usually with a rounded habit) to 2 m tall. Branches erect, old stems grey to brown; branchlets green, puberulent to pubescent, hairs bifarious to uniform (hairs on decurrencies, when present, often somewhat shorter); internodes 2-9 mm; leaf decurrencies evident. Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves usually erecto-patent to patent or recurved (with age); lamina obovate or oblanceolate to elliptic, concave, 12-28 x 4-9 mm; apex obtuse (usually) or subacute (rarely) or shortly apiculate; margin ciliolate; upper surface dark green, ± glossy, glabrous or hairy along midrib; lower surface dull or glossy. Inflorescences with 15-40 flowers, lateral, unbranched, 1.4-5 cm; peduncle 0.5-1.1 cm; rachis 0.8-4 cm. Bracts alternate, narrowly deltoid or lanceolate or elliptic, subacute or acute. Flowers hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels longer than or equal to bracts, 0.5-3.3 mm. Calyx 2-2.5 mm, 4-5-lobed (5th lobe small, posterior); lobes ovate or elliptic, obtuse (usually) or subacute. Corolla tube hairy inside; tube of female flowers approximately equalling calyx; tube of female flowers 1.5-2 mm, shorter than calyx; lobes white at anthesis, rhomboid or ovate to elliptic, obtuse, suberect to patent (usually) or recurved, longer than corolla tube, sometimes with a few hairs toward base on inner surface. Stamen filaments 2.5-5 mm; anthers mauve or pink, approximately 0.9-1.2 mm. Ovary approximately 0.9-1.1 mm; ovules 10-12 per locule; style 3-7.2 mm. Capsules obtuse, approximately 3-3.7 x 3-4 mm, loculicidal split extending 1/3-¾-way to base. Seeds flattened (sometimes strongly), broad ellipsoid to discoid, weakly winged, ± smooth, brown, 1.2-1.5 x 1.1-1.3 mm, MR 0.2-0.3 mm.



Mt Holdsworth (December). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt Holdsworth, October. Photographer: John Sawyer, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from *Veronica truncatula*, the other small-leaved subalpine member of “Occlusae” from NI, in: habit, with branches highly branched toward the apex, producing a dense canopy (Fig. 80A); usually smaller, oblanceolate to elliptic (rather than lanceolate to elliptic) leaves; chromosome number; and flavonoid profile. It has not been determined whether differences in anther colour are consistent. The species resembles, and is possibly closely related to, *Veronica topiaria*, from which it differs most obviously by its non-glaucous leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island - Tararua Ranges, in the areas around Mitre, Mt Holdsworth, Field Hut, Dennan and Mt Hector.

HABITAT

Subalpine shrubland, often close to the tree-line.

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica evenosa Petrie

SYNONYMS

Hebe evenosa (Petrie) Cockayne et Allan

TAXONOMIC NOTES

A few collections - for example, by Petrie and Aston and by Sneddon, from the Tararua Range - have larger leaves than generally seen in *Veronica evenosa*. These specimens could be hybrids with *Veronica stricta*; this hybrid combination was reported for the area by Druce (1968). However, the extent of variation in leaf size in *Veronica evenosa* has not been thoroughly assessed, since many herbarium specimens come from the same small populations. The locality, “base of Mt Ruapehu”, is not likely to be correct. There are no other records from this well-collected area, and it is not represented on the distribution map.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January - February

FRUITING

February - April (June)

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

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’.

evenosa: From the Latin e- ‘without’ and venosus ‘veins’, meaning without conspicuous veins.

NVS CODE

VEREVE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 120

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006 An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 152

Druce, A. P. (1968). Vascular plants of Mt Holdsworth, Tararua Range (including Pig Flat) 2500-4835 ft. Unpublished checklist held at Landcare Research, Lincoln, New Zealand.

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

Description adapted by M. Ward from Bayly & Kellow (2006).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

25 May 2026