

Veronica glaucophylla

COMMON NAMES

hebe

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Bushy rounded shrub with pairs of blueish-green narrow leaves inhabiting mountains of northern Canterbury and south Marlborough. Leaves 9-25mm long by 3-7mm wide. Leaf bud without gap at base. Flowers white, in erect spike longer than leaves. Fruit a dry hairy capsule (lens needed).

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub to 2 m tall. Branches erect, old stems brown; branchlets green or red-brown, puberulent or pubescent, hairs bifarious (usually) or uniform; internodes (1-) 2-7 (-9) mm; leaf decurrencies evident to obscure (sometimes with narrow ridges along margins and medial line of each decurrency, and sometimes also with a slight bulge immediately below each leaf scar). Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves erecto-patent (mostly) to patent or recurved (with age); lamina oblong or elliptic or lanceolate, subcoriaceous, flat or slightly concave, (7-) 9-25 x (2-) 3-7 (-8) mm; apex subacute or acute; 2 lateral secondary veins very faintly evident at base of fresh leaves; midrib thickened below and depressed to grooved above (weakly, and not evident near leaf apex); margin sometimes minutely cartilaginous, minutely papillate and either ciliolate (with minute antrorse hairs) or glabrous; upper surface glaucous, with many stomata, glabrous or hairy along midrib (with minute eglandular and/or glandular hairs); lower surface glaucous. Inflorescences with 15-31 flowers, lateral, unbranched, (1.3-) 1.9-3.9 (-4.6) cm, longer than (usually) or about equal to subtending leaves (rarely); peduncle 0.4-0.8 (-1) cm; rachis (0.9-) 1.3-3 (-3.6) cm. Bracts alternate (although often with an opposite/subopposite pair at base), lanceolate or deltoid (sometimes narrowly), obtuse to acute. rarely hairy outside. Flowers all hermaphrodite or possibly hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels 0.5-2 (-3) mm, hairy (usually) or glabrous (rarely). Calyx 1.5-2.2 mm; lobes ovate or lanceolate or oblong, obtuse (usually) or subacute, very rarely hairy outside. Corolla tube hairy inside; tube of hermaphrodite flowers 1.1-2.3 x t. 1.7 mm, funnelliform or contracted at base, shorter than to longer than calyx (mostly shorter than or equal to calyx, but some specimens from the Hanmer area have corolla tubes slightly longer than the calyx); lobes white at anthesis, circular or rhomboid or oblong (broadly) or obovate, obtuse (sometimes emarginate), patent, longer than corolla tube, sometimes with a few hairs toward base on inner surface. Stamen filaments incurved at apex in bud, 3-4.6 mm; anthers pink or yellow, 1.7-2 mm. Ovary hairy, approximately 1-1.2 mm; ovules 8-10 per locule; style 3-5.3 mm, often hairy. Capsules obtuse or subacute, 2.5-4 x 1.9-3.1 mm, usually hairy, loculicidal split extending $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -way to base. Seeds flattened, broad ellipsoid, brown, 1.6-2.2 x 1.3-1.5 mm, micropylar rim approximately 0.6 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other small-leaved "Occlusae" (Bayly & Kellow, 2006) by the combination of: glaucous leaves (otherwise found only in *V. topiaria* and *V. albicans*); hairy ovaries and capsules (otherwise common only in *V. calcicola* and *V. rakaiensis*) corolla tubes that are usually shorter than or equal to calyces (only sometimes for example, are they slightly longer than calyces). *V. glaucophylla* is distinguished from most glaucous-leaved species of "Subcarnosae" by its small floral bracts and pedicellate flowers.



L. Sylvester, Cobb, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DISTRIBUTION

South Island mountains east of the Main Divide, northern South Island, from the Clarence Valley (Kaikoura ranges, Marlborough) in the north to near Castle Hill (mid-Canterbury) in the south.

HABITAT

Shrubland and scrub.

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica glaucophylla Cockayne

SYNONYMS

Hebe glaucophylla (Cockayne) Cockayne, Veronica traversii var. fallax Cheeseman

TAXONOMIC NOTES

The name "glaucophylla" has sometimes, erroneously, been associated with plants of *H. albicans* from North-West Nelson.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

(December-) January February (-March)

FRUITING

January – May (-December)

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'.

NVS CODE

VERGLA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 80

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[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. 164
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-glaucophylla/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026