Veronica linifolia

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
Blue, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Low subshrub up to 300 mm tall. Stems brown. Branches decumbent to ascending. Branchlets brown or green. Vegetative internodes 1-10 mm long. Stem bifariously eglandular-pubescent only at distal end of internodes. Leaves erect to reflexed. Lamina linear to oblong (narrowly), 10.0-30.0 × 1.5-3.5 mm. Upper surface of leaves glossy, green; lower surface of leaves dull, pale green. Leaf hairs sparse to scattered, along margins (especially at base), eglandular. Apex rounded. Base cuneate. Margin entire, ciliate (especially at base). Petiole 1.5-4.0 mm long. Inflorescence racemose, 1-8-flowered, unbranched, 30-70 mm long at fruiting; peduncle, rachis, and pedicels glabrous. Peduncle 0.5-40 mm long. Rachis 4-42 mm long. Bracts alternate (basal pair sometimes subopposite), linear to narrowly deltoid, obtuse, glabrous or eglandular ciliate near base, margins entire. Pedicels 8-40 mm long, glabrous. Flowers white, sometimes blue, rarely pink at anthesis, corolla throat yellow. Nectar guides evident present on posterior and lateral corolla lobes, colour ring and nectar guides magenta or purple (NW Nelson). Calyx 4-lobed, 4-7 mm long, glabrous or sparsely eglandular hairy on margins; lobes glabrous, lanceolate, deltoid, elliptic or obovate, acute to subacute (acuminate by infolding near apex), entire. Corolla 12-17 mm diameter, tube 0.5-1.5 × 1.0-1.5 mm, hairy inside, hairs long. Stamen filaments white, 4-8 mm long, narrowed at base. Anthers rarely white or pink or magenta, 1.5-2.2 mm long. Nectarial disc ciliolate. Ovary ellipsoid, emarginate, glabrous or apex eglandular hairy, 1.0-1.7 mm long. Style 4-9 mm long. Capsules weakly flattened, didymous, 3.0-4.5 × 3.5-4.5 mm, usually glabrous. Septicidal split of capsule extending to base, loculicidal split extending 1/3–½-way to base. Seeds ellipsoid, obovoid, discoid, pale brown, dark brown or brown, 0.7-1.3 × 0.5-0.9 mm



Haystack ascent. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cultivation ex Lake Daniells. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/05/2011, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
Veronica linifolia is morphologicallly similar to V. colostylis. Both taxa have linear, entire leaves, reduced inflorescences, and broad woody capsules. From Veronica colostylis, V. linifolia differs by the corolla tube which is 0.5–1.5 mm long and hairy inside rather than 1.2-3.5 mm long, and glabrous; by the spreading rather than suberect lobes; conspicuous nectar guides (lacking V. colostylis); by the stamen filaments 4–8 mm rather than 1–3 mm long; and by the style 4-9 mm rather than 2-4 mm long. Veronica linifolia is predominantly outcrossing and V. colostylis is exclusively autogamous.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (North-Western Nelson to the Rangitata River, on both sides of the main divide).

HABITAT
Montane to subalpine. Inhabiting cliffs, rock outcrops, braided rivers (on river gravel), and river banks.

GENUS
Veronica

FAMILY
Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY
Veronica linifolia Hook.f.

SYNONYMS
Parahebe linifolia (Hook.f.) W.R.B.Oliv. subsp. linifolia, Parahebe linifolia (Hook.f.) W.R.B.Oliv.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
October - February

FRUITING
November - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from cuttings, rooted pieces and fresh seed. Plants dislikes drought and humidity.

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'.
linifolia: Narrow-leaved

NVS CODE
VERLIN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 42

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

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-linifolia/

PDF DATE

08 June 2026