Veronica lyallii

COMMON NAMES
Lyall's parahebe, Lyall's speedwell

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
Subshrub to 300 mm tall. Stems brown, red-brown or grey. Branches prostrate to erect. Branchlets brown to grey or purplish. Vegetative internodes 1-20 mm long. Stems bifariously or uniformly eglandular-pubescent. Leaves erecto-patent to recurved. Lamina ovate, oblong, elliptic, orbicular, deltoid, rhomboid, rarely linear, 3-15 × 2-10 mm. Upper surface of leaves dull, green, bronze green, yellowish green or dark green; under surface of leaves dull, green, pale green or pinkish. Leaf hairs sparse or absent, along midrib above, eglandular. Apex rarely acute or subacute or obtuse or rounded. Base cuneate or truncate. Margin glabrous, crenate or rarely serrate, marginal teeth or lobes in 1-10 pairs. Petiole 1-3 mm long. Inflorescence racemose, 3-15-flowered, unbranched, 50-200 mm long at fruiting. Peduncle, rachis, and pedicels glabrous or moderately densely eglandular hairy. Peduncle 20-120 mm long, glabrous, eglandular-pubescent or glandular-pubescent. Rachis 10-100 mm long, eglandular-pubescent or glandular-pubescent. Bracts alternate, linear, lanceolate, elliptic or ovate, subacute, glabrous, glandular-ciliate or eglandular-ciliate, margins entire. Pedicels 8-25 mm long, eglandular-pubescent or glandular-pubescent. Flowers with corolla, corolla tube and lobes pigmented white, pale blue or pink at anthesis, and corolla throat white, pale blue, pink or yellow. Nectar guides evident, obscure or absent, if present magenta, pink or purple. Colour ring magenta, pink or purple. Calyx 4-lobed, 2–4(–4.5) mm long, calyx lobes elliptic, oblanceolate, acuminate, acute or subacute; calyx hairs on margins only, upper surface eglandular, glandular or mixed eglandular-glandular, lower surface glabrous, with minute glandular dots; lobe margins entire. Corolla 8-15 mm diameter, tube 1.5-2.0 × 1.0-1.5 mm wide, hairy inside, hairs short; lobes glabrous. Stamen filaments white, 2.5-4.0 mm long. Anthers white or pink, 1.0-1.5 mm long. Nectarial disc ciliolate. Ovary ovoid or ellipsoid, obtuse, glabrous, 1.0–1.3 mm long. Style (3–) 3.5–4.5(–5) mm long. Capsules weakly flattened), emarginate, 3-5 × 3-4 mm, glabrous. Septicidal split of capsule extending to base, loculicidal split extending ¼-way to base. Seeds ellipsoid or obovoid, pale brown to dark brown, 0.6-0.8 × 0.5-0.6 mm



Greenstone Valley. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 01/03/2013, Licence: CC BY.



Upper Otira Valley, Canterbury (flower). Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Licence: CC BY-NC.

HABITAT
Lowland to subalpine (rarely alpine). Common along stream and river banks and beds, screes, slips, cliffs, seeps, and in similar stony sites

GENUS
Veronica

FAMILY
Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY
Veronica lyallii Hook.f.

SYNONYMS
Hebe lyallii (Hook.f.) Allan, Parahebe lyallii (Hook.f.) W.R.B.Oliv.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September - February

FRUITING
November - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from cuttings, rooted pieces and fresh seed. Popular in cultivation although it 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'.
lyallii: Named after David Lyall (1817-1895), 19th century Scottish naturalist and surgeon with the Royal Navy, who explored Antarctica, New Zealand, the Arctic and North America and was a lifelong friend of Sir Joseph Hooker.

NVS CODE
VERLYA

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 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-lyallii/

PDF DATE

08 June 2026