

Veronica pauciramosa

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

Low growing bushy shrub bearing pairs of small oval leaves inhabiting wetter sites in South Island mountains. Leaves with sharp shoulder at base, ridge on underside is flattened at tip, surface spotted. Leaf bud with triangular gap between leaves at base. Flower spikes near tip of twigs, in short spike.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Spreading low or bushy shrub to 0.5 m tall. Branches erect or ascending, old stems brown or black; branchlets green or yellowish, pubescent (hairs multicellular, usually upward-facing), hairs bifarious; internodes (1-) 1.5-4.5 (-5.5) mm; leaf decurrencies extended for length of internode and often more or less swollen; leaves abscising above nodes with a small portion of lower part of petioles remaining attached to stem. Leaf bud tightly surrounded by recently diverged leaves; sinus broad and shield-shaped. Leaves erect to patent; lamina broadly oblong or elliptic to subcircular, rigid, concave, (3-) 3.5-7 (-9) x (1.5-) 3.5-6 (-11.5) mm; apex obtuse; base abruptly truncate; midrib evident in fresh leaves (below), forming a thickened keel that is characteristically flattened toward leaf apex; margin glabrous or ciliolate (with short, stiff hairs); upper surface dark green, glossy, with many stomata, glabrous; lower surface, dark green, glossy; petiole (0.5-) 1-1.5 (-3) mm, glabrous. Inflorescence with 2-10 flowers, lateral, unbranched, 0.7-1.7 (-2) cm; rachis coarsely hairy. Bracts opposite and decussate. connate, deltoid, obtuse, margins minutely hairy or glabrous. Flowers hermaphrodite. Pedicels absent or if evident then always shorter than bracts. Calyx 3.5-4.5 mm, 3-4-lobed (i.e. depending on extent of fusion of anterior lobes), with anterior lobes united from 2/3 to all the way to apex (sometimes splitting secondarily as fruit matures); lobes narrowly to broadly oblong, obtuse or emarginate (the latter in anterior lobes when fused to just below apex, minutely, glandular ciliolate. Corolla tube glabrous or sparsely hairy inside, 3.7-5 x 1.3-1.7 mm, cylindric, longer than calyx; lobes white at anthesis, elliptic or ovate, obtuse (posterior sometimes emarginate), patent to recurved, shorter than or equalling corolla tube. Stamen filaments 3.7-5.5 mm; anthers magenta, 1.4-1.7 mm. Ovary 1-1.4 (-1.6) mm; ovules 10-15 per locule; style 3.8-8 mm. Capsules obtuse, 4-5.5 x 2.5-3.5 mm, loculicidal split extending to approximately 1/3-way to base (although sometimes splitting further when very old). Seeds flattened (sometimes strongly), ellipsoid (sometimes broadly), weakly winged, pale brown, 1.1-1.8 x 0.8-1.1 mm, micropylar rim 0.3-0.5 mm.



Hunter Mountains, Fiordland. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 19/12/2012, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt Luxmore, Fiordland. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 17/03/2012, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from similar species of “Buxifoliatae” (see Bayly & Kellow 2006) by the combination of: bracts distinctly shorter than calyces; strictly lateral inflorescences; stomata on the upper leaf surface; leaves in which the keel (along the underside of the midrib) is characteristically flattened just below the tip; leaf buds that are closely surrounded by several imbricate leaf pairs; anterior calyx lobes fused between 2/3 and all the way to the apex; and corolla lobes that are comparatively narrow relative to their length (particularly when compared with *V. masoniae* and *V. mooreae*).

DISTRIBUTION

Mountains of South Island, from the Allen Range southward, mostly on or west of the Main Divide, but with a few records from drier mountains of the east. It also occurs on Stewart Island, where it has been collected from Mount Anglem and Mount Rakeahua.

HABITAT

It usually grows in moist or boggy areas in tussock grassland.

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica pauciramosa (Cockayne et Allan) Garn.-Jones

SYNONYMS

Hebe buxifolia var. *pauciramosa* Cockayne et Allan, *Leonohebe pauciramosa* (Cockayne et Allan) Heads, *Hebe pauciramosa* (Cockayne et Allan) L.B.Moore

TAXONOMIC NOTES

As noted by Moore (in Allan 1961), there is one collection at WELT (17269) labelled “Mt Egmont, 4000ft” (D. Petrie, 6 Feb. 1901), and another (WELT 17268) labelled “Port Ross” (T. Kirk, 10 Jan. 1981). No other records are known from either North Island or Auckland Island, and these specimens are not represented on the distribution.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

(October-) November-January (-March)

FRUITING

January-May (-November)

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

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'.

pauciramosa: With few branches

NVS CODE

VERPAU

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

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer.

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 222.

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-pauciramosa/>

PDF DATE

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