

# Veronica petriei

## SYNONYMS

Mitrasacme petriei Buchanan, Leonohebe petriei (Buchanan) Heads, Hebe petriei (Buchanan) Cockayne et Allan

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

Veronica petriei (Buchanan) Kirk

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

HEBPET

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing sprawling shrub bearing pairs of rounded green fleshy leaves inhabiting western Otago mountains. Leaves 5–7.5 mm long by 2.5–5 mm wide, hardly narrowing to leaf stalk. Leaf bud with narrow gap between leaves at base. Flower spike conspicuous, rounded, at tip of twigs, to 6 cm long.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (mountains of Otago and Southland, including Mount Repulse, the Pisa Range, and the Forbes, Humboldt, Livingstone, Hector, Eyre, Garvie and Takitimu mountains).

## HABITAT

It grows on alpine rocks and scree.



Mt Burns, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Hebe petriei, Hector Mountains. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Subshrub or spreading low shrub to 0.3 m tall. **Branches** decumbent, old stems red-brown or brown; branchlets green or purplish, glabrous or minutely puberulent, hairs bifarious; internodes 1.5–6–(9) mm; leaves not readily abscising, persisting on stem, or decaying leaving basal parts attached. **Leaf bud** more or less indistinct and tightly surrounded by recently diverged leaves; sinus narrow and acute. **Leaves** decussate to subdistichous, connate, erectopatent to recurved; lamina obovate or oblong or elliptic (often narrowly), slightly fleshy, concave (shallowly), (4)–5–7.5–(12) × (2)–2.5–5–(5.5) mm; apex obtuse to rounded; midrib slightly thickened below; margin not cartilaginous, not thickened, minutely ciliolate, occasionally tinged red; upper surface green, dull, without evident or with few stomata, hairy toward base; lower surface green; petiole (0.5)–1–2.5–(3) mm, hairy along margins and above. **Inflorescences** with 18–62 flowers, terminal, unbranched (sometimes with numerous sterile bracts towards the base), 0.8–2.5–(6) cm; peduncle 0.1–0.7 cm; rachis 0.5–4.2 cm. **Bracts** alternate, linear to narrowly ovate sometimes minutely hairy outside (especially on lower, sterile bracts). **Flowers** hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). **Pedicels** always shorter than bracts, 0.5–2.5 mm (longest towards base of inflorescence). **Calyx** 4–5–(6.5) mm; lobes linear (usually) to narrowly oblong, acute to subacute. **Corolla tube** glabrous; tube of hermaphrodite flowers (4.2)–5–5.5–(7) × 1.5–2 mm, cylindric, longer than (usually) or equalling calyx; lobes white at anthesis. elliptic (usually narrowly), subacute to obtuse (posterior sometimes emarginate), suberect to recurved, equalling or shorter than corolla tube. **Stamen filaments** remaining erect, 1.3–1.7 mm (hermaphrodite flowers); anthers magenta, 0.9–1.5–(2) mm; sterile anthers of female flowers magenta. **Ovary** conical, 2–2.5 mm; ovules 8–15 per locule; style 3–6 mm; stigma more conspicuous in female flowers. **Capsules** acute, 4–4.5 × 1.7–2.3 mm, loculicidal split extending  $\frac{1}{3}$ -way to base. **Seeds** flattened, ellipsoid to discoid, brown, 0.7–1.1 × 0.6–0.9 mm, micropylar rim 0.2–0.3 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *V. murrelli* (see notes under that species). It is also similar to *V. kellowiae*, in having shortly connate leaves, sterile bracts sometimes present at the base of inflorescences, and magenta anthers held at the mouth of the cylindrical corolla tube. *Veronica petriei* has a longer corolla tube (5–5.5 mm) and calyx (4–5 mm) than *V. kellowiae* (2.8–3.5 mm and 2.5–4 mm respectively); *V. petriei* also usually has a simple terminal inflorescence with alternate bracts and pedicellate flowers, compared to *V. kellowiae* having a terminal inflorescence with opposite bracts and sessile flowers.

## FLOWERING

(October)–December–February–(March)

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

(November)–March

## LIFE CYCLE

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'.

**petriei**: Named after Donald Petrie (1846 -1925), Scottish born Otago botanist

## NOTES ON TAXONOMY

Despite the similarities between *V. petriei* and *V. kellowiae*, the two are geographically disjunct, and analysis of ITS sequences (e.g. Wagstaff et al. 2002) does not suggest that they are closely related.

## NOTES ON ETYMOLOGY

Donald Petrie discovered this species and collected the type specimen (Bayley and Kellow, 2006).

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Bayly MJ, Kellow AV. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Te Papa Press, Wellington, NZ. 388 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

Wagstaff SJ, Bayly MJ, Garnock-Jones PJ, Albach DC. 2002. Classification, origin, and diversification of the New Zealand *Hebes* (Scrophulariaceae). *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 89: 38–63.

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/87374#page/40/mode/1up>.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: Ward, M.D. (Year at time of access): *Veronica petriei* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-petriei/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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