

Veronica spathulata

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

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Subshrub to 100 mm tall. Stems grey. Branches prostrate to erect. Branchlets brown or red-brown. Vegetative internodes 2-35 mm long. Stem pubescence uniform, eglandular pubescent. Leaves erecto-patent and recurved. Lamina orbicular to rhomboid, 2.0-12.0 × 1.5-12.0 mm. Upper surface of leaves dull green or dark green, under surface of leaves dull green, pale green or purple. Leaf hairs sparse to dense, rarely absent, eglandular. Apex subacute, obtuse, rounded or truncate. Base truncate. Margin glabrous or ciliate-pubescent, crenate or lobed. Marginal teeth or lobes in 1-4 pairs. Petiole 1-11 mm long. Inflorescence racemose, 2-8-flowered, unbranched, 7-45 mm long at fruiting. Indumentum of peduncle, rachis, and pedicels dense. Eglandular hairs, of inflorescence white, erecto-patent to antrorse, white. Peduncle 5-30 mm long, eglandular-pubescent. Rachis 2-15 mm long, eglandular-pubescent. Bracts paired and opposite, spathulate, obtuse or subacute, eglandular-hairy above and eglandular-hairy below. Bract margins shallowly to deeply lobed. Pedicels 1-4 mm long, eglandular-pubescent. Flowers glabrous, white or mauve at anthesis, nectar guides absent. Calyx 4-lobed, 3-6 mm long, lobes oblanceolate or obovate, acute to subacute, margins entire or toothed; calyx hairs eglandular, on margins only or on both surfaces. Corolla (5-)6-8 mm diameter, tube 3.0-4.0 × 1.5-2.0 mm wide; lobes, tube and throat. Posterior corolla lobe circular, obtuse, 3.5-4.0 × 3.5-4.0 mm. Lateral corolla lobes circular or broadly elliptic, obtuse, flat, not enfolding stamens, 3.0-4.0 × 3.5-4.5 mm. Anterior corolla lobe elliptic, oblong, obtuse, 3.5-4.0 × 1.5-2.0 mm. Stamen filaments white, 2-3 mm long. Anthers pink or mauve, 0.8-1.0 mm long. Nectarial disc glabrous. Ovary globose, obtuse or emarginate, eglandular hairy, 1.0-1.5 mm long. Style 1.5-2.0 mm long. Capsules strongly flattened, emarginate to didymous, 3.0-4.0 × 3.0-4.5 mm, 1.5-2.0 mm thick, hairy. Hairs eglandular. Septicidal split of capsule extending to base. Loculicidal split of capsule extending ½-way to base. Seeds ellipsoid or discoid, brown, 1.0-1.5 × 1.0-1.5 mm

SIMILAR TAXA

Veronica spathulata is allied to *V. cheesemaniae* from which it differs by being endemic to the North Island, by the entire or bluntly toothed rather than pinnatifid calyx lobes; 2-8-flowered rather than usually solitary (rarely 2-3-flowered) inflorescences; corolla tube 3.0-4.0 cf. 3.5-7.0 mm long (equal to than rather than longer than the lobes); and by the capsule dehiscence being septicidal and loculicidal rather than exclusively loculicidal.



Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 08/02/2012, Licence: CC BY.



Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 09/02/2012, Licence: CC BY.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Volcanic Plateau, Kaimanawa, Kaweka, and Ruahine Ranges).

HABITAT

Alpine. Inhabiting lava and scoria fields, screes, and skeletal soil developed on steep, exposed ridges and fellfield

GENUS

Veronica

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica spathulata Benth.

SYNONYMS

Parahebe spathulata (Benth.) W.R.B.Oliv.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November - January

FRUITING

December - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from cuttings, rooted pieces and fresh seed. However dislikes drought and humidity. Best in an alpine house

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'.

spathulata: Shaped like a flattened spoon (leaves)

NVS CODE

VERSPA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 84

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-spathulata/>

PDF DATE

08 June 2026