

# Veronica stricta var. stricta

## COMMON NAME

koromiko

## SYNONYMS

*Veronica stricta* Benth., *Veronica salicifolia* var. *stricta* (Benth.) Hook.f., *Hebe salicifolia* var. *stricta* (Benth.) Cockayne et Allan, *Veronica parkinsoniana* Colenso, *Hebe parkinsoniana* (Colenso) Cockayne, *Veronica salicifolia* var. *longiracemosa* Cockayne, *Hebe salicifolia* var. *longiracemosa* (Cockayne) Cockayne et Allan, *Hebe stricta* var. *atkinsonii* (Cockayne) L.B.Moore, *Hebe stricta* (Benth.) L.B.Moore var. *stricta*

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Veronica stricta* Benth. var. *stricta*

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

HEBSVS

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40, 80

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Common bushy shrub bearing pairs of narrow pointed thin leaves inhabiting the North and South Islands. Leaves variable, to 127mm long, widest around middle and tapering towards narrow tip, margin hairy (lens needed). Leaf bud with no gap at base. Flowers white or pinkish, spike to 22cm long.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to the North and northern South Island. Somewhat local in the far North, otherwise common and widespread in the North Island. Only locally common in the northern South Island.

## HABITAT

Common in successional habitats from coastal areas to lower montane habitats.



Rotorua, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Rotorua, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

## FEATURES

Shrub or small tree (1-)2(-4) m tall. Branchlets finely pubescent. Stem internodes longer than stem diameter. Leaf bud without sinus. Leaves, spreading, 50-100(-120) mm, dull green to yellow-green (not glossy), lanceolate, linear-lanceolate, somewhat leathery, apex often acuminate, leaf margin usually entire, occasionally toothed. Inflorescence lateral, racemose, much longer than leaves, drooping, sometimes spiraled, all parts except flower finely pubescent. Flowers sweetly (sometimes over powerfully so) scented, lilac, mauve or white. Corolla tube 6 mm, exceeding calyx, narrow, cylindric, lobes rounded. Capsules < 5 mm long, pendent, all parts pubescent.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Veronica stricta* var. *stricta* (including *Hebe stricta* var. *atkinsonii* - which has not valid name in *Veronica*) differ from the other varieties primarily by the open branching habit, dull-surfaced, somewhat leathery leaves, and by the longer stem internodes. Support for the ongoing recognition of *Hebe stricta* var. *atkinsonii* is doubtful. For those who wish to distinguish it, *Veronica stricta* var. *stricta* differs from var. *atkinsonii* by the calyx-lobes, bracts and usually capsules, being finely pubescent, and with the racemes (and capsules) usually drooping.

## FLOWERING

(July-) August (-October) but flowering can also occur sporadically throughout the year

## FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

## FRUITING

(September-) November (-January) but seed capsules may be found throughout the year

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and semi hardwood cuttings.

## 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'.

**stricta:** From the Latin strictus 'upright, stiff'

## WHERE TO BUY

Commonly cultivated, though not often now seen for sale within commercial nurseries.

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

*Veronica stricta* var. *stricta* as currently circumscribed remains a very variable species with both diploid ( $2n = 40$ ) and tetraploid ( $2n = 80$ ) cytotypes known. Further study into this variation is needed.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 February 2005). Description based on Allan (1961) - see also Bayly & Kellow (2006).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Bayly M. and Kellow A. 2006: *An Illustrated Guide to New Zealand Hebes*. Te Papa Press: Wellington.

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.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-stricta-var-stricta/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

