

Veronica maccaskillii

SYNONYMS

Veronica raoulii subsp. *maccaskillii* (Allan) Garn.-Jones; *Hebe raoulii* var. *maccaskillii* Allan, *Parahebe raoulii* subsp. *maccaskillii* (Allan) Heads, *Heliohebe raoulii* subsp. *maccaskillii* (Allan) Garn.-Jones; *Heliohebe maccaskillii* (Allan) D.A.Norton et Molloy

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica maccaskillii (Allan) Heenan

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Tight bushy shrub bearing pairs of small rounded leaves inhabiting north Canterbury limestone. Leaves 4-9 mm long. Flowers pinkish, in clusters of 10-60.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand, South Island. Known only from North Canterbury in the vicinity of Waipara, Waikari, Mt Cass, Mt Brown and Okuku area.

HABITAT

A limestone endemic. Favouring cracked and jointed limestone outcrops, where it is usually found in semi-shaded situations.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Spreading, semi-divaricating shrub 50-300 mm tall. Branches prostrate to decumbent. Leaves erecto-patent to spreading, oblanceolate to obovate spathulate, 4-9(-15) x 2-5(-7) mm, apex obtuse to rounded, margin entire to crenate, with 0-2(-3) pairs of crenations. Upper leaf surface green to bronze-green, dull. Petiole 1-2(-3) mm long. Inflorescence 10-60-flowered. Calyx lobes 5. Corolla white or mauve at anthesis, in which case fading thereafter. Stamen filaments inserted at middle of corolla tube, 3-3.5 mm long. Nectarial disc glabrous to glandular-ciliate. Ovary glabrous or sparsely hairy. Style (4-)6-7 mm long, glabrous, sometimes sparsely hairy at the base. Stigma capitate. Capsule turgid, emarginate, sometimes appearing almost didymous. Seeds 1.2-1.6 x 0.6-0.7 mm.



Habitat at Weka Pass. Photographer: Carol Jensen, Licence: CC BY.



Weka Pass. Photographer: Carol Jensen, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Veronica raoulii* from which it differs by the denser, almost divaricating growth form, smaller, more rounded, barely toothed or entire leaves, and by the mauve to white corollas.

FLOWERING

October to November

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

December to January

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

May be grown from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. However can be difficult to maintain and dislikes humid climates. Probably does best in a well drained, sunny site, growing within a soil subtly enriched with base-rich minerals.

THREATS

Seriously threatened through habitat loss and weed invasion (particularly *Festuca rubra*). This plant is a very narrow-range endemic, whose limestone bluff habitat is now largely surrounded by pasture. Many of the known locations are now either too dry, or suboptimal due to weed invasion from adjacent pasture. Recruitment failure is a problem at many sites.

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'.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Heliohebe maccaskillii was proposed at species rank by Norton & Molloy (2009). Their decision was based on the sympomy of this species with *Heliohebe raoulii* and also by consistent morphological and ecological differences between both species. This view was accepted by Heenan (2012) when transferring this taxon over to *Veronica* at species rank.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (9 August 2009). Description based on Garnock-Jones (1994).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1993: *Heliohebe* (Scrophulariaceae Veroniceae), a new genus segregated from *Hebe*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 31: 323-33.

Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Albach, D.; Briggs, B.G. 2007: Botanical names in Southern Hemisphere *Veronica* (Plantaginaceae): sect. *Detzneria*, ect. *Hebe*, and sect. *Labiatooides*. *Taxon* 56: 571-582.

Heenan, P.B. 2012: Taxonomic notes on the New Zealand flora: new names in *Veronica* (Plantaginaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 50: 87-88.

Norton, D.A.; Molloy, B.P.J. 2009: *Heliohebe maccaskillii* (Plantaginaceae) - a new rank for a threatened limestone endemic, North Canterbury, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 405-409.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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