

Veronica annulata

COMMON NAMES

hebe

SYNONYMS

Veronica armstrongii var. *annulata* Petrie, *Hebe annulata* (Petrie) Andersen, *Hebe annulata* (Petrie) Cockayne et Allan nom. illeg., *Leonohebe annulata* (Petrie) Heads

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica annulata (Petrie) Cheeseman

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 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, St, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp, St

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Spreading low shrub bearing masses of narrow scaly twigs inhabiting the mountains of western Otago. Leaves scale-like, rounded, clasping stem, with a fuzzy line between the hairy-margined leaves (lens needed for both). Flowers white, in groups of 4-10 at tips of twigs.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Eastern South Island where known from Otago and Southland. Sparingly recorded from the Remarkables, Hector, Criffel Ranges and the Takitimu Mountains, also known by one old historic gathering from near Kurow.

HABITAT

Upper montane to subalpine. A species of open, sparsely vegetated shrubland where it is usually found at the toe of steep slopes, often in and around boulders.



Wye Valley. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low, spreading shrub up to 0.5 x 1 m. Branches whip-like, at first erect or ascending, becoming spreading at maturity; internodes 0.5-2.2 mm; branchlets, including leaves 1.8-2.9 mm wide; fused leaf bases finely hairy; nodal joint obscure, exposed or hidden; leaves long-persistent, not readily abscising. Leaves fused, scale-like, appressed, not thickened near apex; apex obtuse, sometimes finely mucronate; margin conspicuously fine-ciliate; exposed surface (the leaf undersides) green to yellowish-green, veins not evident. Inflorescence 25-70 mm long, terminal, unbranched, bearing 4-10 flowers. Bracts opposite and decussate, fused, semi-circular, obtuse. Flowers white, sessile. Calyx 1.5-2.2 mm, 3-lobed, that is with anterior lobes fused to apex (forming one large lobe which may split longitudinally); lobes broadly oblong, obtuse or slightly emarginate. Corolla tube 1.5-1.7 x 1.2 mm, funnellform, shorter than or equaling calyx, inner portion hairy; lobes white at anthesis, broadly oblong, elliptic to obovate, obtuse, erect or recurved, longer than corolla tube. Stamen filaments 2.6-3.5 mm; anthers 1-1.2 mm, pink or purple. Ovary 0.6-0.8 mm, globose, apex didymous; style 2.5-4.2. Capsules 1.8-2.7 x 1.5-1.9 mm, pale brown, obtuse. Seeds 0.9-1.3 x 0.5-0.8 mm, weakly flattened, pale brown, obovoid or narrow and irregular, more or less smooth.

SIMILAR TAXA

Very similar to *Veronica armstrongii* and perhaps it might be better placed within that species, possibly at subspecies rank. The main differences are that in comparison to *V. armstrongii*, *V. annulata* has stouter branchlets, the leaves are more imbricating (overlapping), more strongly appressed, and their apices typically obtuse, and only rarely mucronate. Cytologically *Veronica annulata* is diploid ($2n = 42$) and *V. armstrongii* tetraploid ($2n = 82$). Ecologically *Veronica annulata* appears to prefer well drained, rocky ground, often at the toe of avalanche debris, or rotational slumps, or in colluvial material. *Veronica armstrongii* is consistently found in or near permanently wet ground, usually in close association with bog pine (*Halocarpus bidwillii*).

FLOWERING

October - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

December - March

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings and from fresh seed. An attractive plant for a moist, sunny situation in a free draining soil. A shy flowering species that is intolerant of high humidity and wet climates.

THREATS

Aside from Kurow (where the species has not been seen for well over 100 years) there is no evidence of any decline. *Hebe annulata* just seems to be a naturally, extremely uncommon, plant which in the wild is known from only a few widely scattered locations, and from very few mature individuals.

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'.

annulata: From the Latin *annulatus* 'ringed, ring-shaped'

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Bayly & Kellow (2006)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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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MORE INFORMATION

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

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17 September 2024