

# Nertera villosa

## COMMON NAME

hairy forest nertera

## SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1995)

## FAMILY

Rubiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Nertera villosa* B.H.Macmill. et R.Mason

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

NERVIL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North (scarce north of 37°S (Waipoua, Little and Great Barrier Islands), otherwise common), South, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

## HABITAT

Lowland to montane. Usually in forest. Occasionally along river banks in frost flats. Uncommon in the drier parts of the eastern North and South Islands.



Whirinaki, Urewera, May. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Prostrate hairy herb, openly branched, rooting at nodes. Stems 0.6-1.0 mm diameter with internodes 20-40 mm long, densely hairy when young. Hairs subappressed at first, becoming patent to erect, straight, becoming bent, 3-5-celled, the distal cell tapered to a fine point. Leaves opposite, stipulate, petiolate. Stipule interpetiolar, adnate to base of petiole, broadly triangular, 1.0 × 1.5 mm, undersides hairy when young, becoming membranous. Petiole 4-10mm long, hairy. Lamina broadly ovate-deltoid, 7-15 × 5-13 mm, apex subacute, base truncate, entire, with scattered erect hairs on both surfaces, margins glabrous, rich green above, pale green or purplish below, veins obscure above, clear below, raphides obscure. Flowers bisexual, protogynous, solitary and terminal on short branchlets, sessile, closely subtended by 2 pairs of leaves. Calyx a shallow rim, irregularly lobed, lobes c.0.2 mm long. Corolla funnelform, c. 3 mm long, 4-lobed, lobes ovate, spreading, undersides translucent green with purple flecks, 1 mm long, acute, upper surface hairy, margins papillose. Stamens 4, filaments glabrous, attached to receptacle and adnate to base of corolla tube, anthers yellow, dorsifixed, exerted from corolla. Style bifid, pale green, branches diverging, exerted from corolla. Ovary inferior, 2- celled, with 1 ovule in each cell. Fruit a globose, orange to red, shining, drupe, c. 6 mm diameter, often hairy, pyrenes 2, plano-convex, c.3.5 × 2.5 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Nertera villosa* differs from the other six New Zealand species of *Nertera* by its more robust habit, and in being densely covered in erect to sub-appressed straight hairs comprised of 3-5 cells. *Nertera dichondrifolia* (A.Cunn.) Hook.f. is a more slender plant of northern North Island forests (mostly north of 38°S) with the leaves apiculate and the hairs more sparse, curved, and comprised of 7-13 cells

## FLOWERING

September – January

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

## FRUITING

October – June

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces. An excellent ground cover for a shaded pathway or under taller shrubs and trees.

## ETYMOLOGY

**nertera**: Lowly, low growing

**villosa**: From Latin (villus) meaning shaggy or hairy.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from MacMillan (1995).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

MacMillan, B.H. 1995: *Nertera villosa* B.H.Macmill. et R.Mason (Rubiaceae), a new species from New Zealand. New Zealand Journal of Botany 33: 435-438.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nertera-villosa/>