

Veronica murrellii

COMMON NAME

Murrell's hebe

SYNONYMS

Hebe petriei var. *murrellii* (G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson) L.B.Moore, *Hebe murrellii* G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson, *Leonohebe petriei* var. *murrellii* (G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson) Heads;

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica murrellii (G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson) Garn.-Jones

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 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Sprawling low growing shrub with many erect twigs bearing widely-spaced pairs of small rounded glossy green leaves inhabiting Fiordland mountains. Twigs green. Leaves 3-9mm long by 2-5mm wide. Leaf bud with small gap between base of leaves. Flowers small, white, in spike to 4cm long at tip of twigs.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Fiordland National Park, along and west of the Main Divide, Takitimu Mountains)

HABITAT

Alpine. Inhabiting scree, talus, and sparsely vegetated rock outcrops.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Spreading or trailing gynodioecious subshrub with ascending to erect branchlets, to 200 mm tall. Old stems grey or brown; branchlets greenish to pale brown, with red band at nodes, bifariously pubescent; internodes 1–2× diameter. Leaf bud with narrow acuminate sinus. Leaves spreading, very shortly connate; lamina elliptic to obovate, subcoriaceous, yellowish green above and beneath, 3.5–9.0 × 2.0–5.0 mm, usually with sparse, very short, tapering eglandular hairs on midrib above and beneath and margins, rarely glabrous; apex broadly rounded; base cuneately narrowed to short broad flat petiole; margin entire, yellowish, rounded. Inflorescences terminal, racemose, 10–30 mm long; flowers crowded, spiralled. Peduncle and rachis puberulent; peduncle very short. Bracts linear-lanceolate to narrow-elliptic, obtuse to acute, minutely ciliolate, slightly shorter than calyx lobes. Pedicels erecto-patent, 0.5–2.0 mm long. Flowers sweetly scented, female or hermaphrodite on separate plants. Calyx lobes 4, oblong to elliptic, obtuse to subacute, not overlapping, 2.5–3.0 × 1.0–1.5 mm; margin minutely glandular and eglandular ciliolate. Corolla white; tube 1.5–2.0 × 1.5–2.0 mm, funnelform, glabrous; lobes recurved, elliptic (female) to broadly elliptic (hermaphrodite), obtuse, 2.5–3.0 × 1.5–2.5 mm. Anthers purple, obtuse, fertile and c.2 mm long (hermaphrodite) or sterile and c.1 mm long (female); filaments white, long-exserted, 1(female)-3(hermaphrodite) mm long, erect or slightly spreading. Nectarial disk glabrous, fleshy, green. Style white, glabrous, 1–5 mm long, curving to anterior of flower, clavate below stigma; stigma subcapitate. Ovary ovoid, glabrous, c.1.0 × 0.7 mm. Capsule flattened, ovate, acute, dark brown, 3.5–4.0 × 3.0 mm, 1 mm thick, septical to base, loculicidal at apex only. Seeds pale orange-brown, elliptic, strongly plano-convex, smooth, 0.9–1.1 × 0.6–0.8 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Veronica murrellii is most similar to *V. petriei* from which it differs by generally more compact growth habit, paler green leaves, leaf bases that are barely connate, stems that are distinctly bifariously pubescent, a shorter and broader corolla tube, broader and recurved corolla lobes, while the purple anthers are held well outside the corolla throat on long filaments.

FLOWERING

December - March

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

January – April

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Best in an alpine house or rock garden. Dislikes high humidity.

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'.

murrellii: Named in honour of Robert Murrell, Fiordland explorer

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (28 August 2005): Description from Garnock-Jones and Clarkson (1991)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Clarkson, B.D. 1991: *Hebe adamsii* and *H. murrellii* (Scrophulariaceae) reinstated. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 32: 11-15.

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-murrellii/>