

Veronica strictissima

COMMON NAMES

Banks Peninsula hebe

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub bearing pairs of long narrow leaves and spikes of white flowers inhabiting Banks Peninsula. Leaves to 49mm long by 8mm wide, hardly narrowing to blunt tip, margin hairy (lens needed). Leaf bud with no gap at base. Flower spikes to 11cm long.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub to 2.5 m tall. Branches erect, old stems brown or grey; branchlets olive-green or red-brown, minutely puberulent (usually) or glabrous, hairs bifarious; internodes (1-) 2-13 (-18) mm; leaf decurrencies evident to obscure (often with narrow ridges along medial line and margins). Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves erecto-patent to patent; lamina linear-lanceolate or narrowly oblong, subcoriaceous, flat or concave, (9-) 16-41 (-49) x 3-7 (-8) mm; apex acute to subacute or shortly apiculate; 2 lateral secondary veins sometimes evident at base of fresh leaves; margin sometimes more or less cartilaginous, usually eglandular puberulent or sometimes glabrous; upper surface green, dull, with many stomata, hairy along midrib or glabrous; lower surface light green. Inflorescences with (11-) 20-72 flowers, lateral, unbranched, 1.7-7.7 (-10.7) cm, almost always longer than or very rarely about equal to subtending leaves; peduncle (0.3-) 0.4-1 (-1.5) cm; rachis 1.2-6.5 (-9.2) cm. Bracts alternate, ovate or deltoid (sometimes narrowly), obtuse (mostly) to acute. Flowers hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels 1-4 mm, hairy (indumentum sometimes sparse when compared with that of peduncle and rachis). Calyx 1.5-2 (-2.5) mm; lobes ovate, obtuse. Corolla tube hairy inside; tube of hermaphrodite flowers 1.4-2.9 x 1.3-1.7 mm, funnellform, equalling or slightly longer than calyx; tube of female flowers approximately 1.3-1.8 mm, funnellform, equalling or slightly longer than calyx; lobe, white or tinged deep mauve at anthesis, circular or elliptic (often broadly) or oblong (anterior only), obtuse (posterior sometimes emarginate), suberect to recurved, longer to shorter than corolla tube (posterior lobe always longer than tube, anterior lobe often shorter than tube). Stamen filaments incurved at apex in bud, 3-5 mm; anthers dark magenta or purple, 1.2-1.8 mm; sterile anthers of female flowers purple or light brown. Ovary sometimes hairy, 0.9-1.3 mm; ovules 11-16 per locule, in 1-2 layers; style 2.3-6 mm, sometimes hairy. Capsules subacute or obtuse, 2.9-4 x approximately 2.2-2.6 mm, occasionally hairy, loculicidal split extending up to $\frac{3}{4}$ -way to base. Seeds flattened, more or less broad ellipsoid, not winged to only weakly winged, brown, 1-1.6 x (0.8-) 0.9-1.3 mm, micropylar rim 0.1-0.4 mm.



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 29/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Hebe strictissima. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *V. traversii*, *V. stenophylla* and *V. parviflora*, from which it is distinguished by (among other features) having corolla tubes equal to or only slightly exceeding surrounding calyces. The only other *Veronicas* on Banks Peninsula are *V. salicifolia* and *V. odora*.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic, South Island. Banks Peninsula and the Port Hills.

HABITAT

Grows mostly in open areas on banks and bluffs, or in scrub.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica strictissima (Kirk) Garn.-Jones

SYNONYMS

Veronica parviflora var. *strictissima* Kirk, *Veronica leiophylla* var. *strictissima* (Kirk) Cockayne, *Hebe leiophylla* var. *strictissima* (Kirk) Cockayne et Allan, *Hebe strictissima* (Kirk) L.B.Moore

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Moore (in Allan 1961) suggests the species may form hybrids with *H. salicifolia*, and a specimen potentially matching this parentage is WELT 84066. Aspects of reproductive ecology are discussed by Delph (1990).

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

December-March (-June)

FRUITING

(January-) March-April (-June)

LIFE CYCLE

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

OTHER INFORMATION

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'.

strictissima: Very straight and narrow

NVS CODE

VERSTS

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 80

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Not Threatened

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 176.

Delph, L. F. 1990. Sex ratio variation in the gynodioecious shrub *Hebe strictissima* Scrophulariaceae).

Evolution. 44: 1 34-42.

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

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Bayly & Kellow (2006).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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