

Veronica cockayneana

COMMON NAME

hebe

SYNONYMS

Veronica willcoxii Petrie, *Hebe cockayneana* (Cheeseman) Cockayne et Allan

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica cockayneana Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

HEBCOC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 120

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing bushy shrub with many erect branches bearing pairs of dished oval leaves that are widest towards the tip and with a small knob at the tip inhabiting southwestern South Island mountains. Leaves 10-21.5mm long by 3.5-7.5mm wide. Leaf bud with small gap between base of leaves. Flowers white.

DISTRIBUTION

Southern South Island mountains, mostly on or west of the Main Divide, from Lake Sweeney and the Mataketake Range to near Centre Pass, north of Dusky Sound.

HABITAT

Alpine shrubland and grassland, sometimes in rocky places.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Densely branched, bushy shrub or spreading low shrub (in exposed situations) to 1.2 m tall. Branches erect; branchlets pubescent (with long, multicellular hairs, usually of 4 or more cells, golden or white), hairs bifarious; internodes 2.5-6.5 mm; leaf decurrencies obscure to evident and extended for length of internode. Leaf bud distinct; sinus narrow and acute. Leaves decussate or subdistichous, erecto-patent to patent; lamina usually elliptic (sometimes narrowly) or less commonly obovate, rigid or coriaceous, concave, (5-) 10-21.5 x (3-) 3.5-7.5 (-9) mm; apex subacute; margin minutely papillate and glabrous or minutely glandular-ciliate; upper surface green, glossy, with few or without evident stomata, glabrous or hairy along midrib (hairs to approximately 0.075 mm, many < 0.05 mm); lower surface glaucous (except on midrib or margin); petiole 0.5-2 mm. Inflorescences with (2-) 6-16 (-23) flowers, lateral, unbranched (almost always) or with 3 or more branches, 1-3.2 cm; peduncle (0.15-) 0.2-1.1 cm; rachis 0.6-2.5 cm. Bracts usually opposite and decussate, free or connate (rarely and only very shortly), ovate or deltoid, subacute or acute or rarely obtuse. Flowers hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels (0.5-) 1-5.5 mm. Calyx 1.5-4 mm, with anterior lobes free for most of their length or united $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ -way to apex; lobes ovate, subacute or obtuse. Corolla tube glabrous; tube of hermaphrodite flowers 1.5-2.3 x approximately 1.8-2.5 mm, funnellform, shorter than or equalling calyx; tube of flowers 1-2 mm, shorter than or equalling calyx; lobes white at anthesis, ovate or elliptic, obtuse or subacute, suberect to patent, longer than corolla tube. Stamen filaments 1.4-4.3 mm (fertile 3.5-4.3 mm; sterile 1.4-1.8 mm); anthers magenta, 1.6-2 mm; sterile anthers 0.8-1 mm. Nectarial disc very broad and glabrous. Ovary 1.1-1.3 mm; ovules 9-13 per locule; style 2.5-5.2 mm; stigma noticeably larger in female flowers. Capsules subacute or obtuse, (2-) 3-5.5 x 2.2-3.3 mm, loculicidal split extending $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -way to base (frequently less than $\frac{1}{2}$ -way). Seeds flattened, more or less broad ellipsoid, more or less smooth, brown (sometimes pale), 1.1-1.2 x 0.9-1.7 mm, micropylar rim 0.3-0.5 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Most similar to *V. cryptomorpha* and *V. simulans* neither of which occurs in Fiordland. Flavonoid and chromosome differences are important in separating the three species (Bayly et al. 2002). Morphological differences from *V. simulans* include: consistently entire leaf margins; leaf midribs that are glabrous or more finely pubescent above (hairs up to approximately 0.075 mm long); and mostly elliptic leaves. Morphological differences from *H. cryptomorpha* include mostly elliptic leaves that are generally broader in relation to their width, and smaller in terms of mean leaf length, length of the longest leaves, and the mean distance from a leaf base to its widest point. Similar species from southern South Island (also with an acute sinus in the leaf bud) are *V. arganthera* and *V. dilatata*. *V. cockayneana* is distinguished from the former by its darker anthers, usually smaller leaves, leaf margins that are glabrous or have minute glandular hairs, and leaves that are usually glossy above and glaucous below. This last feature, together with a bushier habit, usually also distinguishes it from *V. dilatata* (in which the leaves vary in glaucousness, but usually not strikingly between the upper and lower surfaces).

FLOWERING

December -February (-March)

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

December - April

LIFE CYCLE

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

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'.

cockayneana: Named after Leonard Cockayne FRS (7 April 1855 - 8 July 1934) who is regarded as New Zealand's greatest botanist and a founder of modern science in New Zealand

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Bayly, M. J., Kellow, A. V., Mitchell, K., Markham, K. R., de Lange, P. J., Harper, G. E., Garnock-Jones, P. J. and Brownsey, P. J. 2002 Descriptions and Flavonoid chemistry of new taxa in *Hebe* sect. *Subdistichae* (Scrophulariaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40: 571-602.
- Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 248.
- 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

MORE INFORMATION

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