

Veronica gibbsii

COMMON NAME

hebe

SYNONYMS

Hebe gibbsii (Kirk) Cockayne et Allan

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica gibbsii Kirk

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

HEBGIB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing sparse shrub with pairs of blue-green oval leaves that have a hairy margin inhabiting the Richmond Mountains. Leaves 9–20mm long by 4–13mm wide, dished, edge sometimes reddish. Flowers white, packed in a spike to 2cm long, on a distinct stalk, clustered at tip of branches.

DISTRIBUTION

South Island - Mountains of eastern Nelson and western Marlborough, where it is known with certainty only from Mt Starveall, Ben Nevis, Mt Rintoul and near Mt Patriarch.

HABITAT

Open, rocky areas.



Mt Patriarch. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At Mt Patriarch. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Sparsely branched, spreading low shrub to 0.35 m tall. Branches decumbent; branchlets green to orange-brown, pubescent (with long, multi-celled hairs), hairs bifarious or uniform; internodes (1-) 2-6 (-8) mm; leaf decurrencies evident and extended for length of internode (stem rounded and smooth). Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves erect to patent (sometimes recurved with age); lamina ovate or elliptic (sometimes broadly), coriaceous or fleshy, ± concave, 9- 20 x 4-13 mm; apex subacute (mostly) or obtuse or acute; base broadly cuneate or slightly amplexicaul; venation evident on underside of fresh leaves, usually not evident above, sometimes including 2 secondary laterals arising from base; midrib often slightly thickened below or not thickened; margin long ciliate, sometimes tinged red; upper surface glaucous, with many stomata, glabrous or hairy along midrib; lower surface glaucous. Inflorescences with (6-) 11-25 (-30) flowers, lateral, unbranched, 1.5-3.5 cm, longer than or about equal to subtending leaves; peduncle 0.5-2.1 cm; rachis 0.8-2.2 cm. Bracts lowermost pair opposite, then subopposite or alternate above, narrowly deltoid, acute (usually) or subacute, sometimes hairy outside. Flowers, probably hermaphrodite. Pedicels absent or when present always shorter than bracts, 0-1 mm. Calyx approximately 2.5-3.5 mm, with anterior lobes free for most of their length or united to 1/3-2/3-way to apex; lobes mostly narrowly deltoid, acute or subacute, often hairy outside. Corolla tube glabrous, 2.5-4 x 1.5-2 mm, cylindrical, longer than or sometimes equalling calyx; lobes white at anthesis, elliptic or ovate, obtuse or subacute, suberect to patent, longer than or equalling corolla tube. Stamen filaments 6-6.5 mm; anthers magenta or dark purple or cream, 2-2.6 mm. Ovary sometimes hairy, approximately 1-1.3 mm; ovules 13-19 per locule, in 1-2 layers; style 6.5- 9.5 mm, sometimes hairy. Capsules acute or subacute, 2.5-4 x 1.6-2 mm, sometimes hairy, loculicidal split extending ¼-½-way to base. Seeds flattened, ovoid-ellipsoid to discoid, ± smooth, brown (sometimes pale), 0.8-1.7 x 0.6-0.9 mm, micropylar rim 0.2-0.5 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other species by its thick glaucous leaves, with margins fringed with long hairs (see also notes under *Veronica amplexicaulis*).

FLOWERING

(October) December - February (March)

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

January – May (November)

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'.

gibbsii: Named in honor of Frederick G Gibbs (1866-1953)

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Notes on cultivated specimens suggest that *Veronica gibbsii* may also occur on Dun Mountain, a locality also implied by a figure caption (but not the text) provided by Salmon (1992), and on Gordons Knob, as also suggested by Martin (1932). A further specimen that lacked an original label was associated, prior to mounting, with collections made by F. G. Gibbs on Mt Franklin, Spenser Mountains, 30 Jan 1896. It remains uncertain whether the specimen came from that locality (approximately 50 km south of known localities) or was accidentally mixed with the other Gibbs collections.

A specimen from "Mt 'Z"; Wairau Valley (on the ridge running northwest from Mt Patriarch) is unusual. It has the stem and leaf characters of *Veronica gibbsii*, which is common in the area, but differs from other collections in having longer, sometimes branched, inflorescences and some flowers that are conspicuously pedicellate. The specimen might possibly be a hybrid (*Veronica divaricata*, which has branched inflorescences and pedicellate flowers, is common in this area), or the product of a developmental abnormality.

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 134
Martin, W. 1932. The Vegetation of Marlborough. Blenheim: (n.p.). Reprinted from the *Marlborough Express*.
Salmon, J.T. 1992. A Field Guide to the Alpine Plants of New Zealand. 3rd edition. Auckland: Godwit Publishing.
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

Please cite as: Ward, M.D. (Year at time of access): *Veronica gibbsii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated).
New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-gibbsii/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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