

Veronica lilliputiana

COMMON NAME

tarn speedwell, tarn parahebe

SYNONYMS

Veronica canescens Kirk, *Hebe canescens* (Kirk) A.Wall, *Parahebe canescens* (A.Wall) W.R.B.Oliv.

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica lilliputiana Stearn

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

PARCAN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island from Canterbury to Fiordland. Recorded by Aston on the Otago Peninsula in 1896 and was rediscovered there in 2011.

HABITAT

Coastal (Otago Peninsula) but otherwise confined to montane areas where it inhabits the margins of ephemeral pools, tarns and lakes, usually in places that dry out in summer.

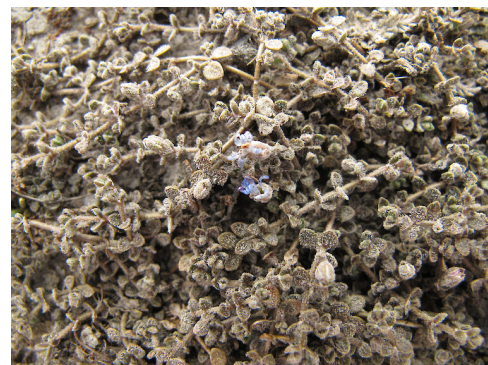
WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).



Parahebe canescens. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Mackenzie Basin, Canterbury. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 25/02/2016, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short-lived creeping herb, 3-10 mm tall. Old stems brown or red-brown. Branches prostrate. Branchlets brown or green. Vegetative internodes 1-15 mm long. Stem pubescence uniform or absent, eglandular pubescent (short curved white hairs). Leaves spreading to recurved. Lamina ovate or obovate or elliptic or orbicular, 1-3 × 1-2 mm. Upper surface of leaves glaucous, dull. Under surface of leaves glaucous, dull. Leaf hairs eglandular, scattered, on all parts of leaf (most dense on midline and at apex). Apex obtuse to rounded. Base cuneate. Margin ciliate, entire. Petiole 0.0-0.5 mm long. Inflorescence 1-2-flowered, 3-12 mm long at fruiting. Indumentum of peduncle, rachis, and pedicels sparse. Eglandular hairs of inflorescence deflexed (and tangled), white. Peduncle 1-5 mm long, eglandular-pubescent. Bracts paired and opposite, obtuse to subacute, eglandular-hairy adaxially and eglandular-hairy abaxially, elliptic or ovate. Bract margins entire. Pedicels suberect at anthesis, straight at fruiting, 2-7 mm long, densely eglandular-pubescent. Flowers: Calyx 4-5-lobed, 2.0-3.5 mm long. Calyx lobes lanceolate to oblong, subacute to obtuse. Calyx hairs on under surface, eglandular. Calyx lobe margins entire. Corolla pale blue at anthesis (paler below). Nectar guides evident, present on all corolla lobes. Colour ring and nectar guides blue. Corolla throat same colour as lobes. Corolla c.10 mm diameter. Corolla tube 1 mm long, 1.0-1.5 mm wide, hairy inside, hairs short. Corolla lobes glabrous. Posterior corolla lobe elliptic, subacute to divided in two, 3-6 × 2-3 mm. Lateral corolla lobes elliptic, obtuse, flat, not enfolding stamens, 3.0-6.0 × 2.0-3.0 mm. Anterior corolla lobe narrowly elliptic, obtuse, 3.0-6.0 × 2.0-2.5 mm. Stamen filaments white, 4-5 mm long, weakly narrowed at base. Anthers mauve or violet, 0.7-1.5 mm long. Nectarial disc glabrous. Ovary ovoid, obtuse, glabrous, 0.8- 1.0 mm long. Style 4.0-5.5 mm long. Stigma 0.5 mm wide. Capsules narrowly angustiseptate emarginate, 1.0-1.5 × 1.0-2.0 mm, c.0.5 mm thick, glabrous. Septicidal split extending to base. Loculicidal extending $\frac{3}{4}$ way to base or to base. Seeds strongly flattened, smooth-surfaced, ellipsoid to obovoid, pale brown to brown, c.0.5 × c.0.3 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by the minute prostrate growth habit, fine, cotton thread-like, branches, entire leaves, which including the petiole, are 1.0-2.5-3.5 mm long; and by the flowers which have very short corolla tubes (<1 mm long) and blue corollas with darker nectar guides.

FLOWERING

October - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

November - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and bulbils but difficult to maintain. Best grown in a sunny situation, kept in a pot, partially submerged in water. Prone to powdery mildew in humid climates.

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'.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Garnock-Jones and Lloyd (2003).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Garnock-Jones, P.J.; Lloyd, D.G. 2003: A taxonomic revision of *Parahebe* (Plantaginaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 181-232.

MORE INFORMATION

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