

# Veronica rupicola

## COMMON NAME

hebe

## SYNONYMS

*Hebe rupicola* (Cheeseman) Cockayne et Allan

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Veronica rupicola* Cheeseman

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

HEBRUP

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing sprawling shrub bearing pairs of glossy green oval leaves inhabiting the Kaikoura mountains. Leaves 7-21mm long by 5-7mm wide, obviously wider towards tip. Leaf bud with narrow gap between leaves at base. Flowers white, base hidden by green scales, in spikes to 5cm long.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to Marlborough and north Canterbury, South Island, between the Chalk Range in the northeast and the Mason Range in the southwest.

## HABITAT

Grows mostly on cliffs or other rocky areas, often near rivers.



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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing bushy shrub to 0.8 (-1.5) m tall. Branches decumbent or ascending or erect, old stems brown: branchlets green (but dark when dry), pubescent or puberulent, hairs bifarious (usually in broad bands between leaf decurrences); internodes (1-) 2-9 (-18) mm; leaf decurrences extended for length of internode and often swollen. Leaf bud distinct; sinus narrow and acute. Leaves erecto-patent to patent; lamina elliptic (mostly) or oblanceolate, coriaceous, slightly concave, (4-) 7-21 (-24) x (2-) 5-7 (-9) mm; apex acute to obtuse; midrib thickened below and depressed to grooved above (but evident above to varying extents); margin minutely papillate and sometimes ciliolate or glandular-ciliate; upper surface light green or yellowish-green, dull, with many stomata, glabrous or hairy along midrib; lower surface light green or sometimes glaucous or glaucescent; petiole (1-) 2-4 (-5) mm, hairy along margins (usually) and hairy above (often) or glabrous. Inflorescences with (5-) 9-37 flowers, lateral, unbranched or tripartite, 1.3-3 (-4.7) cm, longer than (usually) to shorter than subtending leaves; peduncle (0.3-) 0.6-1.7 (-2) cm; rachis (0.7-) 1-2.1 (-2.9) cm. Bracts large, opposite and decussate, free (usually) or connate (sometimes, and then very shortly), ovate or lanceolate, acute (mostly) or subacute or obtuse. Flowers hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels usually absent but if evident then always shorter than bracts, 0-1 mm. Calyx 3-4 (-5) mm, with anterior lobes free for most of their length or united 1/4-1/2-way to apex (degree of fusion can vary in one inflorescence); lobes ovate or lanceolate, subacute or obtuse. Corolla tube glabrous; tube of hermaphrodite flowers 3-4.9 x 1.5-2.3 mm, funnellform (narrowly) or cylindric, longer than (usually) or equalling calyx; lobes white at anthesis, ovate (sometimes narrowly) or lanceolate, subacute or obtuse, suberect to recurved, shorter to longer than corolla tube. Stamen filaments white, 3.3-4.2 mm; anthers white or buff or pink or mauve or violet, 1.3-1.7 mm; sterile anthers 0.6-0.8 mm (on herbarium specimens). Ovary approximately 1-1.3 mm; ovules 8-9 per locule; style 5.5-8.3 mm. Capsules obtuse, 4-4.5 x 2.3-3.2 mm, loculicidal split extending 1/4-1/2-way to base. Seeds flattened, ovoid to obovoid-oblong, straw-yellow to pale brown, 1.4-2.2 x 0.9-1.4 mm, micropylar rim 0.5-0.7 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Has most commonly been confused with *V. rigidula*, which is a similar small shrub of rocky areas and also has a sinus in the leaf bud. It can be distinguished from this and other similar species by the possession of large bracts that surround and almost completely obscure the calyces. It also differs from *V. rigidula* in having longer calyces (3-4 (-5) mm), and leaves that are usually duller green above.

## FLOWERING

December-February (-March)

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

(January-) February-May (-October)

## 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'.

**rupicola:** From the Latin rupes 'rock, cliff' and -cola 'dweller', refers to the usual habitat of the species

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

The localities "Key Summit" (Livingstone Mountains, Southland, given on CHR 33033) and "Aorere River ford" (North West Nelson, given on CHR 468465) are not likely to be correct.

## 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. 236.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

**MORE INFORMATION**

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