

# Veronica spectabilis

## COMMON NAME

Takitimu parahebe

## SYNONYMS

Parahebe spectabilis Garn.-Jones

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

Veronica spectabilis (Garn.-Jones) Garn.-Jones

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic, South Island, Takitimu Mountains, where it is only known between Tower and Excelsior Peak, and from cirques east of that ridge

## HABITAT

High alpine to nival ledges and snow banks.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Subshrub, 30-200 tall. Old stems brown. Branches decumbent to ascending. Branchlets red-brown or purplish. Vegetative internodes 1-4 mm long. Stem pubescence uniform, eglandular pubescent and glandular pubescent. Leaves decussate, erecto-patent to spreading. Lamina obovate to spatulate, 4.5-13.0 × 2.5-6.0 mm. Upper surface of leaves dark green or purple, dull. Under surface of leaves dark green or fruiting, 2.5-5 mm long, eglandular-pubescent and glandular-pubescent; hairs all around pedicel. Flowers: Calyx 4-lobed, 6.5-10.0 mm long. Calyx lobes spatulate, subacute to obtuse. Calyx hairs on both both surfaces, mixed eglandular and glandular (upper surface glandular hairs few). Calyx lobe margins entire. Corolla white at anthesis. Nectar guides absent. Corolla throat same colour as lobes. Corolla 18-25 mm diameter. Corolla tube 2.5-4.5 mm long, 1.5-2.0 mm wide, glabrous. Corolla lobes glabrous. Posterior corolla lobe circular or obovate, obtuse, 10-12 × 10-12 mm. Lateral corolla lobes circular, obtuse, flat, not enfolding stamens, 10-13 × 8-11 mm. Anterior corolla lobe circular or obovate, obtuse, 9-12 × 10-12 mm. Stamen filaments white, 3-4 mm long, not narrowed at base. Anthers magenta or purple, 1.2-1.5 mm long. Nectarial disc glabrous. Ovary ovoid, acute or subacute, eglandular hairy and glandular hairy (at apex), 2-2.5 mm long. Style 3.5-4.5 mm long. Stigma 0.4-0.6 mm wide. Capsules, narrowly angustiseptate, emarginate, 4-5 × 4-5 mm, 1-2 mm thick, hairy. Hairs eglandular and glandular. Septicidal split of capsule extending 1/2 way to base to base. Loculicidal split of capsule extending to base. Seeds ellipsoid, straw yellow or pale brown, 0.9-1.0 × 0.5-0.7 mm.



Veronica spectabilis in fruit, Takitimu Mountains. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 18/02/2020, Licence: CC BY.



Veronica spectabilis in fruit, Takitimu Mountains. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 18/02/2020, Licence: CC BY.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Veronica spectabilis* is very similar to *V. birleyi*, with which it shares leaves with dull grey green upper leaf surfaces and with rounded lobes and reddish abaxial surfaces. In its large pedicellate flowers, glandular leaf hairs, and trilobed leaves it also resembles *V. trifida*. Both *Veronica birleyi* and *V. spectabilis* occupy alpine rock crevices, although *V. spectabilis* is at much lower elevations (1340–1460 m) than *V. birleyi* (1800–2900 m). *Veronica trifida* is a plant primarily of snow-bank meltwater sites.

## FLOWERING

Unknown - has been collected in flower in January

## FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

## FRUITING

Unknown - has been collected in fruit in January

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

## THREATS

Unknown, though it is unlikely to be threatened by browsing animals or weeds because of its stature, apparent habitat preferences and altitudinal ranges. Further field work is needed to clarify its status.

## 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'.

**spectabilis:** Notable

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (5 October 2006). 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

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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