Veronica traversii

COMMON NAME
hebe

SYNONYMS
Hebe traversii (Hook.f.) Cockayne et Allan nom. illeg., Veronica traversii var. elegans Cheeseman, Hebe traversii (Hook.f.) Andersen

FAMILY
Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY
Veronica traversii Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY
Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE
HEBTRA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 40

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Bushy shrub bearing pairs of narrow leaves inhabiting lowland northeastern South Island. Leaves to 44mm long by 9mm wide, margins hairy (lens needed). Leaf bud without gap at base. Flowers white, tubular, in spikes to 7cm long. Fruit a flattened dry capsule to 5.5mm long.

DISTRIBUTION
Eastern South Island, from near Blenheim, Marlborough, to the Four Peaks Range, south Canterbury.

HABITAT
Grows in scrub and at forest margins, often in river valleys, in situations ranging from near-coastal to montane or subalpine.

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub to 2.5 m tall. Branches erect, old stems grey or brown; branchlets green, puberulent (sometimes very minutely and sparsely), hairs almost always uniform or rarely bifarious; internodes (2-) 3-8 (-9.5) mm; leaf decurrencies weakly evident, or obscure. Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves erecto-patent; lamina narrowly oblong or oblong-lanceolate, subcoriaceous, more or less flat or concave, 16-39 (-44) x (2.5-) 3-8 (-9) mm; apex subacute (usually) or obtuse or acute (rarely); 2 lateral secondary veins evident at base of fresh leaves; margin scabrous or ciliate or pubescent (with short, stiff, antrorse hairs); upper surface green or light green, dull, with many stomata (but these not always apparent), hairy along midrib and toward base or glabrous; lower surface green or light green. Inflorescences with 34-72 flowers, lateral, unbranched, (2.3-) 3-5 (-7.3) cm, with all flowers (including those near the apex) generally developing to maturity (although sometimes with a small number of aborted flowers); peduncle (0.35-) 0.6-0.9 (-1.4) cm; rachis (1.4-) 2-4.5 (-5.9) cm. Bracts alternate, ovate or lanceolate, subacute or acute, sometimes hairy outside (near base). Flowers hermaphrodite or female (on different plants). Pedicels (0.8-) 1.2-3 mm. Calyx 1.8-2.2 mm, 4-5-lobed (5th lobe small, posterior); lobes ovate, subacute, either with mixed glandular and eglandular cilia or apparently eglandular ciliate. Corolla tube hairy inside; tube of hermaphrodite flowers (2.5-) 3-4.5 mm, cylindric, longer than calyx; tube of female flowers 2-4 x c. 1.3-1.6 mm, cylindric, longer than calyx; lobes white or tinged mauve or pink at anthesis, elliptic or obovate, obtuse, suberect to recurved, shorter than corolla tube, sometimes with a few hairs toward base on inner surface and/or bluntly papillate inside. Stamen filaments incurved at apex in bud, 2.5-3.3 mm; anthers magenta or pink, approximately 1.5-1.6 mm; sterile anthers of female flowers magenta, 0.8-1.4 (-1.8) mm, Ovary 0.9-1.1 mm; ovules 4-10 per locule; style 4-7 mm. Capsules subacute or obtuse, (3.5-) 4-5 (-5.5) x (1.8-) 2-4 mm, loculicidal split extending ¼-way to base. Seeds flattened (sometimes strongly), ellipsoid or ovoid or oblong, brown, (1.3-) 1.5-2.2 (-2.4) x 1-1.5 (-1.8) mm, micropylar rim 0.3-0.6 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to some forms of *V. stenophylla*, from which it is distinguished by the combination of non-pitted leaves, minutely hairy leaf margins, and hairs inside corolla tubes. It is distinguished from most other species of small-leaved “Occlusae” (see Bayly & Kellow, 2006) by its large capsules and its corolla tubes, which are markedly longer than the calyces.

FLOWERING

December-February (-March)

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

(January-) February-June (-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’.
traversii: Named after William Thomas Locke Travers (1819-1903) who was an Irish lawyer, magistrate, politician, explorer, naturalist, photographer. He lived in New Zealand from 1849 and was a fellow of the Linnean Society.

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. 172-174.
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 traversii Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-traversii/ (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/veronica-traversii/