

Veronica scopulorum

SYNONYMS

Hebe scopulorum Bayly, de Lange et Garn.-Jones

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Veronica scopulorum (Bayly, de Lange et Garn.-Jones) Garn.-Jones

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, PD, RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing sparse shrub bearing pairs of oval blueish-green leaves inhabiting limestone rocks near Kawhia. Leaves m-shaped in cross section, to 55 mm long by 16 mm wide, with a blunt tip. Leaf bud with small gap between base of leaves and hollowed between ridges in cross section.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (western Waikato, south of Kawhia Harbour where it confined to limestone outcrops at the head waters of the Awaroa River and northern Taumatotara Range).

HABITAT

Confined to exposed limestone bluffs and rock outcrops.



Photo taken at Awaroa Scenic Reserve, Kawhia, November. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rock Peak, 1986. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Compact shrub 0.4–0.8 × 0.4–0.8 m. **Mature stems** black or grey, encased in thick cork; young stems green to brown; leaf scars evident; indument pubescent and bifarious to uniform. **Leaf bud** as long as mature leaves; sinus evident, narrowly acute to broad. **Petiole** 2–8 mm. **Leaves** erecto-patent to patent; lamina linear-elliptic, elliptic to narrowly oblanceolate, subcoriaceous, m-shaped in cross section, 14–80 × 4–16 mm, apex plicate, subacute to acute; base cuneate; upper surface green to dark green, glossy, under sides glaucous, dull. **Inflorescences** 7–40-flowered, 1–5 mm long, lateral, compound, racemose with 1–2 branches at base. **Flowers** hermaphrodite, pale mauve at anthesis. **Calyx** 2.3–3.5 mm, 4-lobed; lobes lanceolate, ovate or elliptic. **Corolla tube** 3–4 × 1.5–2 mm, elliptic, lanceolate or oblong, subacute, suberect. **Anthers** apiculate, mauve, violet or white. **Capsules** 3.2–4.5 × 2–3 mm, pale to dark brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Veronica scopulorum is distinct from the much taller *V. stricta* var. *stricta* with which it sometimes grows. *Veronica stricta* var. *stricta* has larger willow-green lance-shaped leaves and flowers carried on long pendulous racemes.

FLOWERING

(September)–October–(–December)

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

November–March

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

The Awaroa koromiko is scarce in cultivation and has proved tricky to maintain being very susceptible to fungal diseases. It dislikes humidity and does best in a free-draining, lime enriched, cool, damp, shady situation.

THREATS

Habitat loss through weed invasion, forest degradation and goat and possum browse.

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'.

scopulorum: Grows on cliffs

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

Recent field surveys employing abseiling and rock climbing techniques have so far discovered many more plants than had been believed at two of the six main known sites. However, at all sites threats from weeds and browsing animals is continuing unabated.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Baylet et al. (2002) (2006) but see also Bayly & Kellow (2006)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Bayly MJ, Kellow AV. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Te Papa Press, Wellington, NZ. 388 p.
- Bayly MJ, Kellow AV, Mitchell KA, Markham KR, de Lange PJ, Harper GE, Garnock-Jones PJ, Brownsey PJ. 2002. Descriptions and Flavonoid Chemistry of New Taxa in *Hebe* sect. *Subdistichae* (Scrophulariaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40(4): 571–602. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.2002.9512817>.
- Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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