



## *Veronica barkeri*

### Common Name(s):

Barker's koromiko, Chatham Island tree hebe

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

### Distribution:

Endemic to the Chatham Islands. Found on Chatham, South East and Pitt Islands.

### Habitat:

Forest and scrub, especially on coastal scarps, forested streamsides and the banks of incised streams. Often epiphytic on tree fern trunks.

### Features\*:

Tree up to 13 m tall producing a dense, rounded to conical, canopy when mature. Branches erect, old stems brown, branchlets green, red-brown or purple, pubescent, hairs uniform; internodes 3–30 mm. Leaf bud pubescent (rarely glabrous) sinus absent. Leaves erecto-patent to patent; lamina 24–90 × 4–30 mm, linear-lanceolate or lanceolate, subcoriaceous, flat to weakly concave, apex acute; margin narrowly cartilaginous, minutely pubescent (hairs eglandular), upper surface yellow-green to light green, midrib distinctly hairy, hairs glandular or rarely eglandular, lower surface paler than upper, conspicuously (or faintly) pitted, each pit containing a single twin-headed glandular hair, midrib hairy, sometimes the rest of the underside also uniformly eglandular pubescent or glabrous. Inflorescence racemose, lateral and unbranched, 20–50-flowered, 28–80 mm long, mostly equal to subtending leaves rarely shorter or longer; peduncle 6–15 mm; rachis 22–68 mm. Bracts alternate, deltoid, oblong, obtuse to acute. Flowers hermaphrodite or gynodioecious. Pedicels 1.0–6.0 mm long, always longer than bracts. Calyx 1.5–4.2 mm long; lobes deltoid, lanceolate to broadly lanceolate, acute to obtuse, externally hairy. Corolla tube 1.4–2.0 × 1.6–1.9 mm, broadly funnelform, shorter than calyx; lobes longer than corolla tube, white tinged with pale blue or mauve, or distally or completely dark blue or pink at anthesis, white or pale blue with age, elliptic, lanceolate, rhomboid or ovate, obtuse, cucullate, suberect to recurved. Stamen filaments 4–5 mm long, white, mauve or blue, straight or incurved at apex in bud; anthers 1.5–2.0 mm long, purple. Ovary 1.1–1.3 mm long, ovoid, hairy; style 2.5–4.5 mm long, hairy. Capsules 4.0–5.0 × 2.8–3.3 mm, hairy, loculicidal split extending  $\frac{3}{4}$ -way to base. Seeds 1.1–2.0 × 1.0–1.4 mm, strongly flattened, ellipsoid-oblong to broadly ellipsoid, winged, pale to dark brown.

### Flowering:

December - March

### Fruiting:

January - April

### Threats:

Extinct in the northern two thirds of the main Chatham Island (though it has been planted at several reserve within that area). Browsing animals (especially cattle, sheep, possums and pigs) pose the greatest threat. Fire and clearance for farming are other threats. Young plants on the ground are highly vulnerable to being browsed. Stem borers can limit fruit production in some seasons. There is some evidence to suggest that isolated trees set lower levels of viable seed. This needs further research.

### \*Attribution:

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Bayly & Kellow (2006) but see also de Lange et (2010)

### References and further reading:

Bayly M.; Kellow A. 2006: An Illustrated Guide to New Zealand Hebes. Te Papa Press: Wellington

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch.

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

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=103](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=103)



**Caption:** In cultivation, Chatham Islands

**Photographer:** John Sawyer



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