



Scutellaria novae-zelandiae

Common Name(s):

New Zealand skullcap, shovel mint

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:

Northern South Island, particularly in the west.

Habitat:

Free draining, alluvial matai (*Prumnopitys taxifolia* (Sol. ex D. Don) de Laub.), black beech (*Nothofagus solandri* (Hook. f. Oerst.), and totara (*Podocarpus totara* (G. Benn.) ex D. Don var. *totara*) forest.

Features*:

Small, creeping, perennial herb forming diffuse patches on forest floor. All parts puberulent to glabrate. Main stems woody at base, creeping, square in cross-section, dark purple-red, maroon to almost black. Branches sparse to many, spreading, sub-erect to erect. Leaves in distant pairs. Petioles 2-20 mm long, slender, dark purple to purple-black. Lamina 3-13 x 2-16 mm, dark green above, pink to purple underneath, ovate, suborbicular to reniform, membranous, entire or 3-5-toothed or lobed, apex obtuse to rounded, base rounded to subcordate or cordate; lamina surface usually glabrate with hairs restricted to veins on leaf undersides, sometimes entirely glabrous; undersides finely dotted with small spherical glands. Flowers single in leaf axils, white. Pedicels 1-3 mm long, < petioles. Bracts subulate. Calyx 2.5-3.5 mm long, puberulent; scale enlarging until at least 1.5 mm long at anthesis. Corolla 6-11 mm long to apex of lower lip, hairy; tube 4-6 mm long, straight, broadening toward apex; lower lip > upper lip, middle lobe broad, rounded, upper lip deeply lobed and rounded. Nutlets 1-1.3 mm long, dark brown, surface granular.

Flowering:

August to March (but sporadic flowering may occur throughout the year)

Fruiting:

August to March (but sporadic fruiting may occur throughout the year)

Threats:

Threatened mainly from weeds which overshadow plants, smother and outcompete them. Some populations have been browsed by goats and cattle.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 November 2009. Description adapted from Webb et al. (1988) and de Lange et al. (2010).

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Christchurch, Canterbury University Press. 471pp

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Naturalised Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons. Christchurch, New Zealand, Botany Division, D.S.I.R.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=118



Caption: *Scutellaria novae-zelandiae*

Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Seeds of *Scutellaria novae-zelandiae*

Photographer: John Barkla