



## *Veronica breviracemosa*

### Common Name(s):

Kermadec koromiko

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Vulnerable

### Distribution:

Endemic to Raoul Island, Kermadec Islands Group.

### Habitat:

Coastal cliffs and headlands, under sparse Kermadec pohutukawa (*Metrosideros kermadecensis*) and Kermadec ngaio (*Myoporum rapense* subsp. *kermadecense*) forest.

### Features\*:

Shrub up 2 x 1.5 m. Branches numerous, somewhat lax and spreading, often layering. Branchlets yellow-green, minutely puberulent. Leaf bud as long as mature leaves, with or without sinus, sinus ovoid to narrowly elliptic. Petiole 5-10 mm. Leaves spreading; 30-150 x 15-30 mm, yellow-green, green to dark-green, firmly fleshy, elliptic, lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, apex acute to subacute, base attenuate to cuneate; lamina entire or with small teeth in upper third; glabrescent with fine pubescence along lamina margin. Inflorescences lateral, racemose, 20-30(-50) mm, shorter than surrounding leaves, mostly simple, sometimes compound with 1(-2) branches at base. Peduncle 5-15 mm long, peduncle and rachis puberulent. Basal bracts often leaf like 3-5 mm long, green. Flowers crowded, pale lilac. Calyx-lobes 4 x 1 mm. Corolla tube 1-1.5 mm, lobes 3 mm, ovate, acute, strongly recurving almost to calyx-lobes. Capsule 5 x 2.5 mm, grey-green, narrowly acute, glabrescent.

### Flowering:

In warmer parts of the country this species can flower throughout the year, further south it generally flowers during the summer months.

### Fruiting:

Fruits may be found throughout the year but are more common in summer.

### Threats:

Once thought to be extinct, this species is still extremely scarce on Raoul Island. Indeed the species was assumed to have been eliminated by goats. When the last goat was shot in 1983 on exactly the same day, a single hebe was rediscovered by a goat hunter! Until 1997 this was the only plant known from the wild, and all New Zealand material is derived from it. However, as part of a weed eradication programme, people abseiling the steep volcanic cliffs of Raoul discovered a further 50 plants. Cuttings and seedlings raised from these plants and the original discovery are now being planted across Raoul Island. Nevertheless the species still remains at severe risk of extinction, mainly through weed invasion of its unstable, volcanic cliff habitat.

### \*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (28 July 2007). Description based on life material held by author supplemented with information obtained from Bayly & Kellow (2006)

### References and further reading:

Bayly, M.J.; Kellow, A.V. 2006: Hebes, identification, classification and biology. Wellington, Te Papa Press.

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=18](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=18)



**Caption:** Ex. Raoul Island

**Photographer:** Gillian Crowcroft



**Caption:** Ex. cult 77B Asquith Avenue, Auckland

**Photographer:** Peter de Lange