



Veronica benthamii

Common Name(s):

Benthams Hebe

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland and Campbell Islands

Habitat:

Coastal to montane. Usually on peat amongst *Chionochloa antarctica* tussocks and shield fern (*Polystichum vestitum*). Sometimes grows around boulder and rock outcrops.



Caption: Campbell Island
Photographer: John Barkla

Features*:

Bushy or spreading shrub up to 1 × 1 m. branches decumbent or ascending; branchlets pubescent or glabrous, if hairy then hairs white, bifarious or occasionally uniform; internodes 1.0-13.0-15.6 mm; leaves abscising at nodes. Leaf bud obscured by surrounding leaves, leaves usually overtopping bud. Leaves connate, erecto-patent to reflexed; lamina elliptic or obovate, coriaceous, flat, 10.0-33.0 × 3.5-14.5 mm; apex obtuse or truncate; midrib thickened below and depressed above; margin conspicuously puberulent, shallowly to deeply toothed; upper surface green, glabrous to hairy along midrib or hairy toward base. Inflorescences 11-30-flowered, mostly terminal, unbranched or with 3 or more branches (up to 4 lateral branches but never compound branching); peduncle 8-19 mm; rachis 16-93 mm. Bracts opposite and decussate, mostly free rarely connate, usually obovate sometimes elliptic, apex surmounted with a prominent gland, obtuse or subacute, occasionally emarginate. Flowers blue on pedicels 1-4 mm long, these hairy or glabrous. Calyx 3.0-8.5 mm, 4-6-lobed; lobes oblong or obovate, obtuse or subacute with a prominent apical gland, eglandular ciliate (hairs white, long and tangled), glabrous externally, hairy inside. Corolla tube 2.0-3.2 × 3.5-3.9 mm, cylindric, somewhat dorso-ventrally compressed, glabrous, < calyx; lobes 4-6, sky-blue or violet at anthesis, darkening to blue with age, obovate to circular, obtuse (posterior occasionally emarginate), erect to patent, > corolla tube; corolla throat blue or white. Stamen filaments blue, erect, 1.0-1.5 mm; anthers blue, 1.2-1.6 mm. Ovary 1.8-2.3 mm, 2-3-locular; style 2.1-3.2 mm. Capsules latiseptate (2-locular) or turgid (3-locular), subacute, 4.5-6.0 mm, hairy, septicial splits sometimes extending only 3/4-way to base, loculicidal split extending 1/4-3/4-way to base (usually < 1/2-way). Seeds 1.2-1.9 × 1.3-1.6 mm, straw-yellow or dark brown, strongly flattened, broad ellipsoid to discoid, winged.

Flowering:

October - May

Fruiting:

November - October

Threats:

A Naturally Uncommon, Range-Restricted endemic abundant within its known habitats which are part of Nature Reserves and World Heritage Sites whose access requires permits issued by the New Zealand Department of Conservation. There are no known threats to this species

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (15 August 2005): Description modified from Bayly and Kellow (2006)

References and further reading:

Bayly, M.; Kellow, A. 2006: An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Te Papa Press, Wellington.

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=519