



Veronica obtusata

Common Name(s):

hebe

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

North Island - Occurs near the west coast of North Island, chiefly west of Auckland between Muriwai and Manukau Heads, but also further south, at Kawhia Harbour.

Habitat:

Strictly coastal. Usually found on sparsely vegetated steep slopes and banks, in low windswept scrub and on cliff faces and rock stacks. May be found threaded through carices, *Poa anceps* and flax (*Phormium tenax*).

Features*:

Spreading low shrub to 0.5 m tall. Branches prostrate or decumbent, old stems brown or grey; branchlets red-brown, puberulent, hairs bifarious or uniform (sometimes very sparse); internodes (2-) 10-39 mm; leaf decurrencies evident (often with a narrow ridge along medial line) or obscure. Leaf bud distinct; sinus absent. Leaves decussate to subdistichous, erecto-patent to patent; lamina obovate (usually) or elliptic or circular or oblong. Coriaceous, flat or slightly m-shaped in transverse section, (6-) 20-55 x (6.5-) 11-20 (-28.5) mm; apex obtuse or rounded or rarely retuse; margin cartilaginous, pubescent (usually very conspicuously), often tinged red; upper surface dark green, glossy, without evident stomata, usually hairy along midrib; lower surface light green, hairy along midrib and sometimes covered with minute glandular hairs (when young). Inflorescences with 34-88 flowers, lateral, unbranched, 3.8-12.6 cm; peduncle 0.7-3.1 cm; rachis 3.2-9.5 cm. Bracts alternate, lanceolate or narrowly oblong, acute or subacute, sometimes hairy outside. Flowers hermaphrodite. Pedicels 1-3.3 mm sometimes recurved in fruit. Calyx 2.5-3.5 mm; lobes narrowly elliptic or oblong, obtuse to acute, often hairy outside. Corolla tube hairy inside and sometimes outside, 2.3-4 x 1.7-2 mm (usually quite asymmetric - longer on anterior side), funnelform, about equalling or longer than calyx; lobes white or tinged mauve at anthesis. white or mauve with age, ovate or lanceolate or elliptic, obtuse or subacute, suberect to patent, longer to shorter than corolla tube (varies on one flower because of asymmetric division of corolla), hairy inside or at least with a few hairs toward base on inner surface and sometimes ciliate (near base) or hairy outside. Stamen filaments white or mauve, 4.7-7.5 mm; anthers buff or mauve, 1.5-2.2 mm. Ovary sometimes sparsely hairy, 0.8-1 mm; ovules approximately 10-13 per locule; style 5-7 mm, sometimes sparsely hairy. Capsules acute or subacute, 3.7-4.5 x 2-2.3 mm, sometimes hairy, loculicidal split extending 1/4-way to base. Seeds flattened, ellipsoid to discoid, straw-yellow, 0.9-1.3 x 0.7-0.9 mm, micropylar rim approximately 0.2 mm.

Flowering:

(November-) January-August

Fruiting:

(November-) January-September

Threats:

Not Threatened. However, close to extinction within the Kawhia part of its range where it only secure on some of the southern islets within the harbour.

*Attribution:

Description adapted by M. Ward from Bayly & Kellow (2006).

References and further reading:

Bayly, M.J., Kellow, A.V. 2006. An illustrated guide to New Zealand Hebes. Wellington, N.Z.: Te Papa press pg. 186.

de Lange, P. J. 1996. *Hebe bishopiana* (Scrophulariaceae) - an endemic species of the Waitakere Ranges, west Auckland, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany*34: 187-94.

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=531



Caption: Hebe obtusata

Photographer: Bec Stanley



Caption: Hebe obtusata

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth