



Veronica armstrongii

Common Name(s):

Armstrong's Whipcord

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Endangered

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, Canterbury. Initially recorded from the headwaters of the Rangitata River where it now seems to be extinct. Populations are now known from near Castlehill and in the Nigger Valley. Past records from North West Nelson are based *H. ochracea* M.B.Ashwin, those from the Clarence, *H. hectorii* (Hook.f.) Cockayne et Allan, and those from Kurow seem to be the result of accidental inclusion of cultivated specimens with a wild collection of *H. annulata* (Petrie) Cockayne et Allan.

Habitat:

Apparently confined to bog pine (*Halocarpus bidwillii*) dominated vegetation growing on river terraces, along tarn margins and on small islands within tarns. Seems to require seasonally high water tables, or at least habitats with moderately high levels of available moisture.

Features*:

Bushy whipcord hebe up 1 x 1m but usually less. Branches erect or ascending, intermodes (0.7-)0.9-1.6 mm, branchlets including leaves 1.5-2(-3) mm wide, leaf bases hairy, fused together, nodal joint distinct or obscure, usually exposed. Leaves persistent on old branchlets. Leaves fused, appressed (when fresh) spreading when drying. Leaf not thickened near apex, apex obtuse, apiculate or subapiculate, margin ciliate, lower surface yellowish-green, veins not evident. Inflorescences terminal, unbranched, with (2-)8(-10) flowers. Flowers sessile, calyx 1.5-2 mm, 3-lobed, lobes ovate or oblong, obtuse or emarginate. Corolla tube hairy inside, 1-1.7 x 1.3-1.6 mm, equal to or shorter than calyx, lobes ovate or elliptic to broadly oblong, obtuse, suberect to patent, longer than corolla tube, white or mauve, if mauve fading to white with age. Stamen filaments 2-3 mm, anthers yellow or tinged pink 1.4-1.6 mm. Ovary globose, 0.8-1 mm. Capsules obtuse 2.3 x 1.6 mm.

Flowering:

October - January

Fruiting:

December to November

Threats:

Seriously threatened through loss of habitat. This species seems to require permanently damp or boggy ground, and usually grows amongst bog pine (*Halocarpus bidwillii*) adjacent tarns or on swampy alluvial flats. Of the two populations known, one has declined despite intensive management probably because the habitat has dried out, and is now persisting only due to regular

***Attribution:**

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 October 2006. Description based on Bayly & Kellow (2006).

References and further reading:

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

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=64



Caption: Enys Scientific Reserve, in netted enclosure, December 1994
Photographer: G. M. Crowcroft



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