

Celmisia densiflora

COMMON NAME

mountain daisy

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia densiflora Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELDEN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: From southern Marlborough and North Canterbury south to northern Southland.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine. Inhabiting grassland, herbfield, fell-field and open subalpine shrubland.



Danseys Pass, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt St Bathans. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tufted herb with stout woody simple or sparingly branched stock; leaf-sheaths densely imbricating, forming a pseudo-stem. Lamina coriaceous, narrow- to narrowly obovate-oblong, $\pm 60-150 \times 15-40$ mm, obtuse or subacute; upper surface glabrous or nearly so; lower densely clad in appressed white satiny tomentum; both with evident midrib; margins very slightly recurved, bluntly (sometimes apiculately) crenate-sinuate, narrowed to petiole of diverse dimensions; sheath strongly ribbed, glabrous or very nearly so, c. 50×10 mm. Scape $\pm 150-400$ mm long, glabrous, glandular-viscid, purplish, stout; bracts linear, lamina $\pm 25-40$ mm long, apiculate, clad below in white satiny tomentum. Capitula 25-40 mm diameter; involucre bracts numerous, linear-subulate, glabrous, viscid, up to c. 15 mm long, apex hairy. Ray-florets c. 15-20 mm long, narrow; disk-florets 7-8 mm long, funnelform, teeth narrow-triangular, c. 1 mm long. Achenes compressed-cylindric, c. 6 mm long, strongly grooved, with appressed silky hairs on ribs. Pappus-hairs slender, up to c. 6 mm long, white to sordid-white, barbellate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allan (1961) aligned this species with *Celmisia parva*, from which he distinguished it by the larger leaves (60-150 x 15-40 mm cf. < 60 x 15 mm in *C. parva*) which are conspicuously rather than minutely toothed. However, the late A.P. Druce regarded *C. densiflora* and *C. prorepens* as the same species. Further study into the status of this species pair, as indeed the taxonomic status of all *Celmisia* is urgently needed.

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a shaded site, planted within a permanently moist, free draining, acidic soil. Dislikes humidity and will not tolerate drying out. Best grown from fresh seed which should be sown immediately or stratified in a fridge or freezer for 1-3 months.

ETYMOLOGY

celmisia: Apparently named after Kelmis, one of Idaean Dactyls, a group of skilled mythical beings associated with the Mother Goddess Rhea in Greek mythology. Kelmis, whose name means 'casting', was a blacksmith and childhood friend of Zeus, son of Rhea and later king of the gods. In Ovid's 'Metamorphoses', Kelmis is described as offending Zeus who turned him into adamant so he was as hard as a tempered blade

densiflora: Densely flowered

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: *Flora of New Zealand. Volume I.* Government Printer, Wellington.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/celmisia-densiflora/>