

Celmisia insignis

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia insignis W.Martin

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELINS

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: ST

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: drainage basins of the Waihopai, Spray, Avon, Omaka, and Blairich Rivers between the Wairau and Awatere Rivers in Marlborough.

HABITAT

Lowland to alpine, on rock faces and bluffs near streams or around rock outcrops in tussock grassland.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Woody-based herb with branchlets arising from a multicapital stock at ground level; living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets, the whole plant forming small patches of several rosettes; leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted, forming a pseudo-stem. Leaf lamina 120-270 x 5-7 mm, coriaceous, erect or slightly curved, linear; upper surface with a prominent medial groove, somewhat sulcate in some plants, concolorous, dull green with an conspicuous silver-leadened pellicle; lower surface densely covered in glistening appressed tomentum, midrib prominent; tip acute; margins entire, revolute. Petiole short. Sheath up to 80 x 15 mm, greenish or slightly yellowish, clad in floccose white hairs. Scape clad in appressed white hairs, stout, up to 300 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, up to 4 cm long, margins revolute; monocephalous. Ray florets c.70, ligulate, the limb linear-spathulate, white. Disc florets 100-150, 7-8 mm long, funneliform, yellow, tube with long eglandular hairs. Achene more or less fusiform, grooved, 5-9 mm long, glabrous or rarely with a few short appressed bifid hairs. Pappus unequal, 6-9 mm long, of 30-40 barbellate bristles.



Black Birch Range (February). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Bounds, Leatham River. Photographer: Simon Moore, Licence: CC BY-SA.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Celmisia dubia*, *C. monroi*, *C. morganii* and *C. semicordata*, from which species it differs by very narrow (5-7 mm wide cf. > 20 mm wide) longitudinally recurved leaves.

FLOWERING

October - March

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

November - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Prefers a free draining, moist soil, and once established is extremely tolerant of drought. Dislikes humidity.

THREATS

A naturally uncommon species that does not appear to be actively threatened. However, its preference for lower elevation habitats within a region that is becoming ever increasingly popular for growing grape vines means that some populations are now potentially at risk through land conversion. Some large populations occur at higher elevations where this species is less likely to be threatened in the long term.

ETYMOLOGY

celmisia: Apparently named after Kelmis, one of the 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

insignis: Outstanding or remarkable

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Description from Given (1980).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Given, D.R. 1980: A taxonomic revision of *Celmisia coriacea* (Forst.f.) Hook.f. and its immediate allies (Astereae-Compositae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 18: 127-140.

MORE INFORMATION

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