

Celmisia traversii

COMMON NAME

mountain daisy

SYNONYMS

Celmisia praestans Allan

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia traversii Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELTRA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 108$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Tasman Mountains as far south as the Wangapeka Saddle; along the main divide from St Arnaud Range to about Doubtful Valley; scattered populations in mountains south of Wairau Valley to Hanmer; Shale Peak, Canterbury; eastern Fiordland from Key Summit to the Hump and Cameron mountains; Mararoa Valley; Takitimu Mountains).

HABITAT

Montane to alpine. Mostly in tussockland and rocky herbfield, especially south facing. In inland Marlborough it occurs on shaded bluffs in the headwaters of major rivers.



Cobb valley, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rachael Range, Molesworth. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Woody-based herb with short branchlets arising from a multicapital stock, usually just below the soil surface; living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets; the whole plant forming a clump of few to many rosettes. **Leaf sheaths** densely imbricate and compacted into pseudostem. **Leaf lamina** 50–300 × 15–90 mm, coriaceous, at first erect but later decumbent, lanceolate, elliptic, oblong to sometimes oblanceolate; upper surface often sulcate, concolorous, deep green, glabrous or with whitish hairs especially along the midrib; lower surface densely clad with thick ferrugineous or deep buff tomentum; tip acute, margins entire, rimmed with ferrugineous hairs; base obliquely cuneate or truncate; petiole usually short, sometimes up to $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ lamina length, purple, often clad in floccose whitish hairs. **Scape** purple, clad in buff or ferrugineous tomentum, up to 300 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, linear; monocephalous. **Capitula** up to 60 mm diameter. **Involucral bracts** in several series, linear-subulate, erect, clad throughout with brown tomentum. **Ray florets** c. 75, ligulate, the limb linear-lanceolate, white. **Disc florets** c. 160, funneliform, yellow; tube with eglandular, biseriate hairs. **Achene** fusiform cylindric, strongly ribbed, 5 mm long, glabrous. **Pappus** unequal 6–7 mm long, of c. 30 bristles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the closely related, allopatric ***Celmisia cordatifolia*** by the leaf blade which is cuneate to truncate, rarely < 100 mm long, and by the brown-tomentose involucral bracts.

FLOWERING

November–March

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December–May

LIFE CYCLE

Pappate cypselae are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

One of the few *Celmisia* that is easily grown in most climates though it dislikes high humidity. Best grown in a moist, free draining soil, within some afternoon shade. Plants can be raised from division but are best grown from fresh seed.

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

traversii: Named after William Thomas Locke Travers (1819–1903) who was an Irish lawyer, magistrate, politician, explorer, naturalist, photographer. He lived in New Zealand from 1849 and was a fellow of the Linnean Society.

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Given (1984)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Given DR. 1984. A taxonomic revision of *Celmisia* subgenus *Pelliculatae* section *Petiolatae* (Compositae—Astereae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 22(1): 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1984.10425241>.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

MORE INFORMATION

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