

Celmisia spectabilis subsp. magnifica

COMMON NAME

Cotton daisy, mountain daisy, shephards tobacco

SYNONYMS

Celmisia spectabilis var. *magnifica* Allan

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia spectabilis subsp. *magnifica* (Allan) Given

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELSSM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = c.108$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: Big Ben Range and Acheron Valley just north of Rakaia River, south to the Hunters Hills and Mount Studholme.

HABITAT

Alpine and subalpine grassland and herbfield rocky sites



Mount Somers. Feb 1982. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Woody-based herb forming mats or cushions 2.0 m diameter; with branchlets arising from a usually hidden simple or multicapital stock. Living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets, the whole forming a cushion or mat. Leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted, forming a pseudostem. Leaf lamina 70-290 × 1-45 mm, (ratio of length to width 5.6-10); coriaceous, usually lanceolate-oblong to narrowly ovate; upper surface shining and sulcate: lower surface densely covered in soft felted pale buff tomentum, midrib distinct; tip acute; margins entire and recurved, occasionally minutely toothed, with the lamina base cuneate to cuneate-truncate; sheath green to purple. Petiole thin with evident veins. Scape densely clad in floccose white hairs, stout, up to 300 mm long, bracteate, monocephalous. Corolla of disc florets and achenes often with uniseriate and biseriate hairs, mostly hairy, rarely glabrous. Ray florets 40-100, ligulate, white. Disc florets 60-200, 5-9 mm long, funneliform: tube glabrous or with scattered uniseriate or biseriate hairs. Achene fusiform cylindrical, grooved, 1.5-6.5 mm long, usually sparsely covered in bifid hairs, rarely glabrous. Pappus hairs 5-9 mm long, barbellate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Celmisia spectabilis* subsp. *spectabilis* by the longer, broader leaves (70-290 × 1-45 mm cf. 30-180 × 3-30 mm in subsp. *spectabilis*), and cuneate to cuneate-truncate rather than angled leaf base. The achenes of subsp. *spectabilis* are glabrous and those of subsp. *magnifica* mostly sparsely hairy. *Celmisia spectabilis* subsp. *magnifica* occurs to the south of the range of subsp. *spectabilis* from the Big Ben Range and Acheron Valley just north of Rakaia River, south to the Hunters Hills and Mount Studholme. From *Celmisia spectabilis* subsp. *lanceolata*, subsp. *magnifica* differs by its restriction to the South Island, and by its cuneate to cuneate-truncate rather than attenuate lamina base, and pale buff rather than almost white coloured tomentum. The leaf sheath of subsp. *lanceolata* is greenish rather than green to purple.

FLOWERING

October - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

November - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. All three subspecies of *Celmisia spectabilis* are easily grown in most climates though they dislikes high humidity. They are best grown in a moist, free draining soil, within some afternoon shade.

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

spectabilis: Notable

magnifica: Meaning 'splendid'

Where To Buy

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Given (1984)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Given, D.R. 1984: A taxonomic revision of *Celmisia* subgenus *Pelliculatae* section *Petiolatae* (Compositae—Astereae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 22: 139-158.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/celmisia-spectabilis-subsp-magnifica/>