

Celmisia armstrongii

COMMON NAME

Armstrong's mountain daisy

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia armstrongii Petrie

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELARM

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 North-West Nelson (Heaphy-Goulard Downs area; Little Wanganui-Wangapeka; Mount Glasgow) south to near the head of Lake Wakatipu on Mount Bonpland. This species is most abundant west of the Main Divide.

HABITAT

Montane to alpine. In high rainfall areas where it can be common in wet grassland and herbfield.



Arthurs Pass, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Routeburn, Fiordland. Photographer: John Sawyer

FEATURES

Moderately stout woody-based herb with branchlets arising from a multicipital stock, usually hidden; living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets, the whole forming irregular carpets, or less often clusters of 1-8 rosettes; leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted, forming a pseudo-stem. Leaf lamina 120-400 × 10-20 mm, coriaceous, erect when young but soon becoming patent, linear oblong; upper surface sulcate, bronze-green with a conspicuous orange-brown strip along the midrib, somewhat paler immediately outside this, pellicle bronze-yellow, obvious; lower surface densely covered in glistening appressed tomentum, midrib prominent; tip acute; margins entire, conspicuously recurved; base cuneate, petiole short. Sheath up to 80 × 25 mm, yellowish, clad in floccose white hairs. Scape densely clad in floccose white hairs, not as stout as in preceding species, up to 35 cm long; bracts several in upper half, erect, up to 60 mm long; monocephalous. Ray florets 100-120, ligulate, the limb narrow linear, white. Disc florets c.130, 7-8 mm long, funneliform, yellow, the tube sparsely eglandular biseriate hairy. Achenes fusiform to cylindrical, grooved, 4-5 mm long, moderately to densely hairy; hairs short, appressed, bifid. Pappus unequal, up to 8 mm long, of c.40 barbellate bristles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *C. coriacea* (a south-western South Island endemic) by the leaves which are < 20 mm wide

FLOWERING

November - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

January - April

LIFE CYCLE

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

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 Idaeian 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

armstrongii: Named either after Joseph Francis Armstrong (1820-1902) or his son John Beattie Armstrong (1850-1926).

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

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.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

MORE INFORMATION

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