

Celmisia armstrongii

COMMON NAMES

Armstrong's mountain daisy

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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 cylindric, 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

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.

GENUS

Celmisia

FAMILY

Asteraceae



Bealey Valley. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



Routeburn, Fiordland. Photographer: John Sawyer, Licence: CC BY-NC.

AUTHORITY

Celmisia armstrongii Petrie

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November - February

FRUITING

January - April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

CULTIVATION

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

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

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

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to *Celmisia* in New Zealand](#)

NVS CODE

CELARM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

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

ATTRIBUTION

Description from Given (1980)

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026