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 × l0-20 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.

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

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

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-Gouland 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

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

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