

Celmisia brevifolia

COMMON NAMES

common shrub 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

Sprawling subshrub forming loose clumps up to c.0.8 m diameter; stems and branches stout, woody, clad in long-persistent leaf-remnants; branchlets rather stout, clad in imbricate, suberect, finally $\pm$ reflexed leaves. Lamina coriaceous, 10-20 $\times$ 6-9 mm, oblong to obovate-oblong; upper surface viscid, at first clad in thin pellicle, or pellicle long enduring; lower surface clad in subappressed soft white or almost satiny tomentum, midrib evident or obscured; apex obtuse, margins remotely and minutely toothed to subentire, very slightly recurved; base abruptly narrowed to sheath or very short petiole. Sheath very thin, glabrous, $\pm$ translucent, up to 10 mm long, closely appressed to branchlet. Scape slender, viscid, $\pm$ 40-80 mm long, erect; bracts few, lamina linear, up to c. 10 mm. long. Capitula 20-30 mm diameter; involucral bracts narrow-linear to narrow linear-spathulate, c.8 mm long, $\pm$ densely clad in floccose hairs on margins and towards apex, midrib evident. Ray-florets narrow-spathulate to linear, tube $\pm$ glandular, limb-apex 3-4-toothed, margins recurved when dry. Disk-florets 5-6 mm long, narrowly funnelform, teeth triangular. Achenes 2-3 mm long, compressed-cylindric, ribs rather densely clad in short ascending hairs. Pappus-hairs slender, white to sordid-white, up to c.5 mm long, very finely barbellate.

SIMILAR TAXA

One of a small group of celmisias that are readily recognised by their stout, woody, subshrub growth habit with leaves that overlap but never form rosulate tufts at the stem apices. From *C. gibbsii* and *C. rupestris* it is distinguished by the oblong rather than linear or lanceolate leaves which are 6-9 mm rather than up to 5 mm wide, and which have rounded rather than narrowly obtuse, acute or acuminate apices

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: Throughout.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine. Widespread in open grassland, rocky places and fellfield.

GENUS

Celmisia

FAMILY

Asteraceae



Hector Mountains. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Old Man Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

AUTHORITY

Celmisia brevifolia Cockayne

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October - February

FRUITING

November - April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and hardwood cuttings. Reasonably easy to grow but dislikes humidity and cannot tolerate drying out. Best grown in a rockery or within a pot in an alpine house.

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

brevifolia: Short-leaved

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to Celmisia in New Zealand](#)

NVS CODE

CELBRE

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 At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NR, NS, NStr, Sp, TL
[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

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsidea, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085

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>.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961)

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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