

Celmisia cordatifolia var. cordatifolia

COMMON NAMES

mountain daisy

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Woody-based herb with short branchlets arising from a sparsely multicapital stock, usually just below the soil surface; living leaves in rosettes at the tips several rosettes. Leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted into a pseudostem. Leaf lamina 40-120 × 20-50 mm, coriaceous, at first erect but later decumbent, cordate to ovate; upper surface often sulcate, concolorous, yellowish to glaucous-green, glabrous or with scattered white hairs when young; lower surface thickly clad in felted, dull, deep buff to dark chocolate brown hairs: tip acute; margins entire, slightly to moderately recurved, often with a rim of ferruginous hairs; base prominently cordate; petiole up to twice lamina length, purple, covered in floccose ferruginous hairs. Scape purple, clad in dense ferruginous tomentum, up to 350 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, linear, monocephalous. Capitula up to 60 mm diameter. Phyllaries in several series, linear-subulate, erect, glabrous in lower part and densely brown-tomentose towards tip. Ray florets c. 25, ligulate, the limb linear-lanceolate, white. Disc florets c. 110, funneliform, yellow; tube with eglandular biseriate hairs. Achene fusiform cylindric, ribbed, 4-5 mm long, glabrous. Pappus unequal, 5-6 mm long, of 25-30 bristles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Could be confused with *Celmisia traversii* which is common south of the Wairau River. From that species *Celmisia cordatifolia* differs by its shorter leaves which are distinctly cordate, and yellowish- or glaucous-green rather than bright green. *Celmisia cordatifolia* var. *similis*, a doubtfully distinct taxon differs from var. *cordatifolia* by its thinner and more pointed leaves whose lamina margins are prominently rather than weakly recurved, and by the tomentum of lower surface which is closely appressed, lustrous, and coloured pale buff rather than rather thickly felted, dull, and coloured deep buff to chocolate brown. *Celmisia cordatifolia* var. *similis* is known only from a few gatherings all made from Mt Richmond in the Wairau Mountains. *Celmisia cordatifolia* var. *brockettii* differs by the lanceolate-cordate rather than cordate-ovate leaf. Very little is known about var. *brockettii* which was not regarded as distinct by Given (1984) but seems every bit as distinctive as var. *similis* which he did accept.

DISTRIBUTION

Distribution: Endemic. South Island: Wairau Mountains (Mounts Fishtail, Old Man, Rintoul) Bryant Range (Mt Starveall, Duppa), Ben Nevis.



Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 27/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Base of leaf (abaxial side) showing lobes (giving cordate shape to leaf). Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 27/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

HABITAT

Alpine (1300–1600 m a.s.l.). On skeletal soils and associated peat within rocky herbfield.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, narrow range endemic which though extremely localised is common in its few known localities and under no obvious human induced threats.

GENUS

Celmisia

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia cordatifolia Buchanan var. *cordatifolia*

SYNONYMS

Celmisia petiolata var. *cordatifolia* (Buchanan) Kirk

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October - January

FRUITING

December - April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown. Probably easy from fresh seed that has been cold treated. However, like many *Celmisia* probably difficult to maintain in warm or humid climates.

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

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

CELCVC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

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.

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

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (22 February 2009). Description based on Given (1984)

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026