Celmisia hookeri

COMMON NAMES
Hooker's 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
Stout, woody based herb with short branchlets arising from a weakly multicipital, partially buried rootstock. Leaves in dense rosettes at branchlet apices; the whole plant forming a mat of rosettes. Leaf-sheaths greenish-purple, persistent, densely imbricate and compacted to form a pseudostem. Petioles 1/4-1/2 lamina length, pale or deep purple, often with a thin covering of pale lustrous pale hairs which are floccose towards base. Lamina 120-400 x 40-90 mm, oblanceolate to elliptic, upper surface yellow to pale green with greenish-purple midrib; upper surface initially hairy, becoming glabrate to glabrous with age (except for margins), veins impressed; lower surface densely covered in lustrous indumentum of pale buff or creamy hairs, veins distinct; apex acute, margins entire, not recurved, with a broad rim of whitish to buff hairs; base obliquely cuneate; lamina coriaceous, initially erect, tending to suberect or decumbent with age. Scape up to 500 mm long, purplish, covered in pale indumentum, bracteate, bracts numerous, erect, linear, foliaceous. Capitula solitary, up to 100 mm diameter. Involucral bracts in several rows, linear-subulate, erect, densely brown-tomentulose. Ray florets up to 80, ligulate, limbs linear-lanceolate, white. Disc florets up to 250, funneliform, yellow; tube covered with eglandular biseriate hairs. Achene 5 mm long, fusiform-cylindric, ribbed, glabrous. Pappus unequal, 9 mm long, of between 35-40 bristles.

Celmisia hookeri. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

Horse Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
A well marked and distinctive species whose stout, coriaceous leaves up to 400 mm long, greenish-purple sheath and leaf midrib, broad capitula up to 100 mm in diameter, and pappus hairs up to 9 mm long serve to distinguish it from other allied Celmisia. C. hookeri is allopatric from all other New Zealand members of Celmisia subgenus Pelliculatae section Petiolatae.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. South Island Northern and eastern Otago from Moeraki and Shag Points inland through the Wainakarua River, Trotters Gorge, Otepopu River to the Horse Range and Macraes Flat; also by the Mataura River and between Mid Dome and Slates Ranges. There are historical but unverified records from the Waitaki Valley.

HABITAT
Coastal to montane (0 - 450 m a.s.l.). A rupestral favouring open to partially shaded rocky headlands, bluffs, cliff faces, steep gullies and boudler field. Sometimes found under grey scrub but only in relatively open situations.

THREATS
A widespread, at times locally common but usually sparsely distributed species. Its cliff, bluff and gorge habitats could be relictual and it is possible that past fires and animal browse has confined this species to these habitats. However, there appear to be few existing threats, populations appear stable, and as there is no direct proof of past decline this species best fits the concept of a sparse defined by the New Zealand Threat Classification System.

GENUS
Celmisia

FAMILY
Asteraceae

AUTHORITY
Celmisia hookeri Cockayne

SYNONYMS
None

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September - December

FRUITING
October - April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Pappate cypselae are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Difficult. Can be grown in non-humid climates and is one of the few Celmisia that generally grows well in most garden conditions. However, it can be fickle. Should be grown from fresh seed and planted in a fertile, free draining sunny situation. Dislikes excessive moisture, and humidity.

WHERE TO BUY
Not commericially available.

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
hookeri: Named after Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker (born 1817) - a world famous botanist who travelled on the Antarctic expedition of 1839 under the command of Sir James Ross and wrote “Handbook of New Zealand Flora” published in 1864-67 describing many specimens sent to Kew by collectors. He died in 1911 and has a memorial stone at Westminster Abbey London.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY
Key to Celmisia in New Zealand

NVS CODE
CELHOO

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
2004 | Sparse
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: NR, NStr, RR 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, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Government Printer, Wellington.
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 (1 February 2009). Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Given (1984). Some of this factsheet information is derived from Flora of New Zealand Online and is used under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence.

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/celmisia-hookeri/

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