

# Celmisia incana

## COMMON NAME

white mountain daisy

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Celmisia incana* Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## NVS CODE

CELINC

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands from Te Moehau (Coromandel Peninsula) south to Otago

## HABITAT

Montane to alpine in grassland, herbfield, boulderfield, on rock outcrops and tors and other similar rocky places.



Jacks Pass, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Ruahine Range, near Sunrise Hut. Photographer: John Sawyer

## FEATURES

Stems stout, woody, up to ± 100 mm diameter; branches stout, woody, clad in long-persistent reflexed leaves; living leaves in close rosettes, patent. Lamina 20-40 × 10-15 mm, obovate-oblong, coriaceous; upper surface ± densely clad in appressed white tomentum forming a pellicle; lower surface densely clad in similar but more appressed tomentum, midrib evident to obscured; apex subacute to obtuse, often apiculate; margins very slightly recurved, remotely denticulate, narrowed to very short petiole up to 5 mm wide, or sometimes directly into thin almost glabrous striate sheath c.10-15 × 7-10 mm. Scape slender, up to 120 mm long, often short at flowering stage, densely clad in floccose hairs. Capitula 25-35 mm diameter; involucre bracts linear-subulate, many, 10-15 mm long, floccose on outer surface, glandular near apex. Ray-florets narrow, up to 12 mm long, white; limb gradually widening to apex. Disk-florets funnelform, c.7-8 mm. long, teeth narrow-triangular; anthers usually distinctly but shortly tailed. Achenes 3.0-3.5 mm long, compressed-cylindric; ribs rather obscure, clad in rather stiff ascending hairs. Pappus of white or sordid-white slender, minutely barbellate hairs up to 7-8 mm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by the silvery white leaves which are hairy on both sides. It is most likely to be confused with *Celmisia hectorii* which also has silvery white hairy leaves but in that species the leaves are linear-spathulate, linear-oblong to linear-obovate instead of obovate-oblong. *Celmisia allanii* regarded by some New Zealand botanists as distinct is seen here as part of the natural variation of *C. incana*. From *C. incana* it is said to differ by having smaller leaves, and by the tomentum of the underleaves being floccose rather than satiny but the distinctions are not clear cut.

## FLOWERING

September - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## FRUITING

November - May

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Best grown in non-humid climates. *Celmisia incana* is one of the few *Celmisia* that generally grows well in most garden conditions. However, it can be fickle. Best grown from fresh seed and planted in a fertile, free draining semi-shaded situation. Dislikes excessive moisture, and humidity.

## 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

**incana:** Hoary (greyish white haired)

## WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

## NOTES ON TAXONOMY

*Celmisia allanii* W.Martin is sometimes included within *C. incana* by New Zealand botanists. But this informal view has yet to be properly tested taxonomically. For this reason *C. allanii* is regarded as distinct from *C. incana*.

## ATTRIBUTION

P.J. de Lange (7 April 2009). Description adapted from Allan (1961)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Government Printer, Wellington.

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

**CITATION**

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**MORE INFORMATION**

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