

# Celmisia insignis

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

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## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Woody-based herb with branchlets arising from a multicipital stock at ground level; living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets, the whole plant forming small patches of several rosettes; leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted, forming a pseudo-stem. Leaf lamina 120-270 x 5-7 mm, coriaceous, erect or slightly curved, linear; upper surface with a prominent medial groove, somewhat sulcate in some plants, concolorous, dull green with an conspicuous silver-lead pellicle; lower surface densely covered in glistening appressed tomentum, midrib prominent; tip acute; margins entire, revolute. Petiole short. Sheath up to 80 x 15 mm, greenish or slightly yellowish, clad in floccose white hairs. Scape clad in appressed white hairs, stout, up to 300 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, up to 4 cm long, margins revolute; monocephalous. Ray florets c.70, ligulate, the limb linear-spathulate, white. Disc florets 100-150, 7-8 mm long, funneliform, yellow, tube with long eglandular hairs. Achene more or less fusiform, grooved, 5-9 mm long, glabrous or rarely with a few short appressed bifid hairs. Pappus unequal, 6-9 mm long, of 30-40 barbellate bristles.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Celmisia dubia*, *C. monroi*, *C. morganii* and *C. semicordata*, from which species it differs by very narrow (5-7 mm wide cf. > 20 mm wide) longitudinally recurved leaves.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: drainage basins of the Waihopai, Spray, Avon, Omaka, and Blairich Rivers between the Wairau and Awatere Rivers in Marlborough.

## HABITAT

Lowland to alpine, on rock faces and bluffs near streams or around rock outcrops in tussock grassland.

## THREATS

A naturally uncommon species that does not appear to be actively threatened. However, its preference for lower elevation habitats within an region that is becoming ever increasingly popular for growing grape vines means that some populations are now potentially at risk through land conversion. Some large populations occur at higher elevations where this species is less likely to be threatened in the long term.

## GENUS

Celmisia

## FAMILY

Asteraceae



Black Birch Range. Jan 2006. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 27/03/2021, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## AUTHORITY

*Celmisia insignis* W.Martin

## SYNONYMS

None

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

October - March

## FRUITING

November - May

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Prefers a free draining, moist soil, and once established is extremely tolerant of drought. Dislikes humidity.

## ETYMOLOGY

**celmisia:** Apparently named after Kelmis, one of Idaeian 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

**insignis:** Outstanding or remarkable

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

## NVS CODE

CELINS

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: ST

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## 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.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description from Given (1980).

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026