

Celmisia mackaui

COMMON NAME

Banks Peninsula daisy, Akaroa daisy

SYNONYMS

Celmisia coriacea Raoul auct. non *Celmisia coriacea* (G.Forst.) Hook.f.

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia mackaui Raoul

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELMAC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, Banks Peninsula only

HABITAT

Coastal to montane: Usually found in damp, rocky places, especially along precipitous south-facing bluffs and waterfalls. Occasional extending into tussock grassland, and on sheltered rocky outcrops. Occasional found in seepages amongst *Phormium*.



Banks Peninsula. Photographer: Rick Menzies



Celmisia mackaui. Photographer: John Barkla

FEATURES

Woody-based herb with short branchlets arising from a multicapital stock, usually just below the soil surface; living leaves in rosettes at the tips of branchlets; the whole plant forming a loose mat of numerous rosettes. Leaf sheaths densely imbricate, and compacted into a pseudostem. Leaf lamina 100-700 × 15-75 mm, somewhat flaccid, erect but tending to spread, lanceolate to narrow-elliptic; upper surface concolorous, bright to dark green, veins obvious; lower surface glabrous, glaucous green; tip acute; margins entire, often slightly recurved; base cuneate; petiole short, to 1/3 length of lamina, usually deep purple, glabrous or with scattered whitish hairs. Scape purple, up to 650 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, subulate, somewhat leafy; monocephalous. Capitula up to 50 mm diameter. Involucral bracts in several series, subulate, erect, glabrous. Ray florets 60-70, ligulate, the limb more or less linear, creamy white often tinged violet when capitulum first open. Disc florets c.200, funneliform, yellow; tube with eglandular biseriate hairs. Achene fusiform-cylindric, strongly ribbed, c.5 mm long, glabrous. Pappus unequal, c.7 mm long, of 55-60 bristles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from all other *Celmisia* by the glaucous green leaf blade which is glabrous beneath. In this species the ray florets are usually pale violet in the bud stage and when first expanded, but fade to become white by anthesis.

FLOWERING

October - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December - May

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. *Celmisia mackauii* is widely cultivated in many parts of New Zealand. It does best in a shaded, moist but free draining soil. Like most *Celmisia* it dislikes humidity and will not tolerate drying out.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon narrow range endemic, that is locally widespread in the small part of Banks Peninsula from which it is known. Some populations are in decline as a natural consequence of vegetation succession to taller forest, this species having temporarily expanded its range into habitats created by past logging, fires and attempts at farming.

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

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from commercial nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Given (1984)

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

MORE INFORMATION

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