

Celmisia similis

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1969)

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia similis Given

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CELSIM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 108$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: North-West Nelson, north of the Buller Valley and west of the Motueka Valley and tributaries.

HABITAT

Alpine and subalpine. Usually associated with *Chionochloa australis*, *Celmisia traversii*, and *C. spectabilis*.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small slender cushion-forming subshrub with branchlets up to 60 mm long. Living leaves tending to be near the tips of the branchlets and sometimes forming small rosettes. Leaf lamina linear, apiculate, rigid, reflexed at the base, $10-20 \times 1-2$ mm; upper surface covered with a silvery to grey pellicle; lower surface with a loose scurfy grey tomentum; sheath ± 10 mm long. Scape $40.0-60.0 \times 1.5$ mm, reddish, clad in deciduous eglandular hairs. Involucral bracts erect, up to 9 mm long, margins fringed with short hairs, abaxial surface bearing many eglandular hairs. Receptacle obconic and alveolate. Capitulum 10-15 mm diameter. Ray florets ± 10 mm long, tube glabrous. In disc florets, corolla tube gradually narrowed from apex to base, glabrous; stamen tip acute, anther tails short; style bifid, the arms differentiated into a lower parallel-sided papillose portion and an upper attenuate portion bearing long collecting hairs. Pappus bristles unequal, up to 4.5 mm long, with distant or sometimes moderately close fine teeth. Achene $1.5-2.0 \times 0.4$ mm, fusiform, compressed, weakly ribbed and clad in bifid hairs.



Denniston Plateau. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 29/10/2014, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



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SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *C. laricifolia* from which *C. similis* differs in the darker distinctly red colour of the scapes, and by the stiffer and wider leaves which are silvery and pellicled on the upper surface (those of *C. laricifolia* being bronze-green and glabrous). Another distinction is that in fresh specimens the leaves of *C. similis* tend to be clustered towards the branchlet tips, whereas those of *C. laricifolia* are usually fairly evenly distributed along the branchlets

FLOWERING

December - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

January - April

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

One of the few *Celmisia* that is easily grown in most climates though it dislikes high humidity. Best grown in a moist, free draining soil, within some afternoon shade. Plants can be raised from division but are best grown from fresh seed.

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

similis: Similar to another species

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Given (1980)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Given, D.R. 1969: Taxonomic notes on the genus *Celmisia* (Compositae). New Zealand Journal of Botany 7: 389-399.

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 11: 285-309

MORE INFORMATION

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