

Celmisia verbascifolia subsp. membranacea

SYNONYMS

Celmisia petiolata var. *membranacea* Kirk

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Celmisia verbascifolia subsp. *membranacea* (Kirk) Given

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Dicotyledonous Herbs - Composites

NVS CODE

CELVSM

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: Brunner Range; Victoria Range; Spenser Mountains; along main divide south to about Amuri Pass.

HABITAT

Alpine. In rocky herbfield and shaded bluffs.

FEATURES

Woody-based herb with short branchlets arising from a multicapital stock, usually just below the soil surface; living leaves in few to numerous rosettes at the tips of branchlets; the whole plant either solitary or forming a loose mat of a few rosettes. Leaf sheaths densely imbricate and compacted into a pseudostem. Leaf lamina up to 100 × 12-70 mm, submembranous though often flaccidly so, leaves usually at first erect, becoming decumbent with age, elliptic, oblong, or occasionally obovate; upper surface sometimes obscurely sulcate, concolorous, pale to mid-green glabrate above when mature except on margin; lower surface dull, thinly covered in cream-coloured tomentum, veins obscure; tip acute; margins entire, flat, with a very narrow rim of hairs slightly darker than those of lower surface; base rounded to truncate; petiole up to and occasionally exceeding lamina length, green to purple, clad in floccose, whitish hairs. Scape purple, clad in whitish tomentum, up to 400 mm long; bracts numerous, erect, linear sometimes leaf-like; monocephalous. Capitula up to 40 mm diameter. Involucral bracts cream, glabrate, in several series, linear-subulate, erect, glabrate to silky tomentose. Ray florets 70-80, ligulate, the limb linear-lanceolate, white. Disc florets c. 130-170, funneliform, yellow; tube with eglandular, biseriate hairs. Achene fusiform-cylindric, ribbed, 4-5 mm long, glabrous or with scattered bifid hairs. Pappus unequal, c.6 mm long, of c. 20-30 bristles.



Rahu tops, southern Victoria Range, 1300m elevation. Photographer: Rowan Hindmarsh-Walls



Rahu tops, southern Victoria Range, 1300m elevation. Photographer: Rowan Hindmarsh-Walls

SIMILAR TAXA

Celmisia verbascifolia subsp. *membranacea* differs from subsp. *verbascifolia* by the submembranous, rather than coriaceous leaves with rounded to truncate bases, and by the glabrate involucre bracts.

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December - March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed but difficult to maintain. Dislikes high humidity. Best in a shaded site planted in a moist free draining soil.

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

Not commercially available.

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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/celmisia-verbascifolia-subsp-membranacea/>