



Title: "Coy"

Description: Denniston Plateau

Photographer's name: Noelle Bennett

Where and when: Denniston Plateau, West Coast, October 2021

Sustainability: Here we are back at Denniston Plateau and I have to confess that this *Celmisia* (native Daisy) took me rather by surprise. It was still fairly early in spring (13 October) and we were at an elevation of around 700 metres. We'd stopped by the rather imaginatively named(!) S Creek, where we were wandering over the sandstone blocks that border the creek. I noticed a slight undercut and nestling in there in amongst the prostrate manuka was this beautifully delicate *Celmisia*. It looked as though it was almost too coy to share its beauty with the world at large. It certainly warranted an image in an attempt to try to show this perfect little scene.

The habitats on the Denniston Plateau include 'Pākihi', a Māori word that can mean "open country" or "barren land", or alternatively "a clearing in forest" or "place where fern root was dug up". It's commonly boggy with small pools or tarns and a network of small streams. The soils are acidic and water logged on account of high rainfall and poor drainage (an iron pan prevents draining). The water in the streams and tarns is brown. Perhaps bleak and uniform to some people, the special ecological community is all the more interesting to others, especially if you look carefully. There are some specialist endemic plants, fish and snails on the plateau. One of the more unusual plants living in the boggy areas is carnivorous bladderwort ("Fairy Aprons", *Utricularia dichotorna*).

This stark white *Celmisia* flower stood out in contrast to its dark green and brown surroundings. Most of New Zealand's native plant flowers are white. This is thought to be an evolutionary adaptation to attract moths which are their main pollinators and colour blind – overseas flowers have evolved bright colours to attract butterflies and bees to pollinate them.

Photo specs: This image is a composite of three images which have each been taken using different exposure levels in order to maximise the dynamic range of the finished photograph. I wouldn't normally attempt this technique with flowers but the undercut meant there was sufficient shelter to stop the foliage moving around too much. Technical specs: The image was taken using a Panasonic DC-G9 camera and a Panasonic Lumix G-Vario 12-35mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure details - 1/80 sec at f14 with an ISO of 200 and a focal length of 35mm (70mm full frame equivalent).

This is one of a series of four in the Ecosystems Photography portfolio captured from the plateau: "Mount Rochfort paradox", "Tussock haven", "Coy" and "Bonsai beauty".

Digital specs: 7706 x 5777 pixels (44.52MP) @ 300dpi

Key words: Mount Rochfort, Denniston Plateau, West Coast, Westport, Buller, Noelle Bennett, Ecosystems Photography, sustainability, conservation.

Price: \$300 (incl. GST) for use of the digital image. Visit www.ecosystemsphotography/sales for details & to order, or to get a quote if you would like a high-quality print.

Donation: The price includes a \$100 donation to a sustainability organisation or project of your choice, or otherwise to the West Coast Branch of the *Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society* <https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/west-coast>.

We recommend that the donation goes to West Coast branch of *Forest & Bird* to support their work on predator trapping, environmental advocacy and education. They have a Kiwi Conservation Club for younger members. Mobilising conservation action on the West Coast is a formidable logistic challenge – the district is 400 km long and there are about 80 members only – they could do with our support.

Image ref: NB#033 (please use this reference in all orders and correspondence).