

Achillea ptarmica

[Synonyms : *Chamaemelum ptarmica*, *Ptarmica vulgaris*]

SNEEZEWORD is a perennial. Native to temperate Europe, including Britain it has small creamish-centred, white flowers.

It is also known as *Achillée sternutatoire* (French), *Aigrettes* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), *Aquilea* (Spanish), Ball of snow, Bastard pellitory, *Centofoglie* (Italian), European pellitory, Fair-maid-of-France, *Gewöhnliche Sumpf-Schafgarbe* (German), Goose tongue, Goosewort, *Herbe-à-éternuer* (French), *Milenrama* (Spanish), Milfoil, *Millefeuille* (French), *Millefoglie* (Italian), *Myši chvost* (Slovak), *Nyse-Røllike* (Danish), *Nyseryllik* (Norwegian), *Nysört* (Swedish), *Ojakärsämö* (Finnish), Pearlwort, Pearl yarrow, *Řebříček bertrám* (Czech), *Schafgarbe* (German), Seven-year's-love, *Silfurhnappur* (Icelandic), Sneezeweed, Sneezeweed yarrow, Sneezewort tansy, Sneezewort yarrow, Sneeze-yarrow, *Sumpf-Schafgarbe* (German), *Tusenskön* (Swedish), *Vitpytta* (Swedish), White tansy, White yarrow, *Wilde bertram* (Dutch), Wild pellitory, Yarrow, and *Ystrewlys* (Welsh).

The crushed leaves are aromatic. The flowers are pollinated by bees and flies.

Ptarmica is derived from *ptarmike* (a Greek name for a plant that caused sneezing) with reference to the plant's use as snuff or perhaps Greek *ptairo* (to sneeze).

The leaves have been eaten fresh or cooked as a flavouring in salads.

Some authorities note that sneezewort was popular as an ornamental garden plant in Europe by at least 1500 – and that in Renaissance times there it was being recommended for easing headaches and clearing the head. (Certain varieties of sneezewort are still popular in gardens today.)

The flowers are sometimes cut for inclusion in fresh floral arrangements.

The leaves have been used as an insect repellent.

Its sharp smell was supposed to provoke sneezing and when dried and crumbled the roots or leaves were used as snuff. Sneezewort was also chewed to ease toothache.