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### *Anthriscus cereifolium*

[Synonyms : *Anthriscus longirostris*, *Cerefolium anthriscus*, *Cerefolium cereifolium*, *Cerefolium sativum*, *Chaererefolium cereifolium*, *Chaerophyllum sativum*, *Scandix cereifolium*]

**GARDEN CHERVIL** is an annual or biennial. Native to the Caucasus, Europe, Middle East and Russia it has small white flowers.

It is also known as *Baz-atrila* (Indian), *Cerefeuil* (French), *Cerefolho* (Portuguese), *Cerefolio* (Esperanto), *Cerefólio* (Portuguese), *Cerefollio* (Portuguese), *Cerfoglio* (Italian), *Chèrifi* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), *Cherfieil* (Channel Islander-Guernsey), Chervil, Common chervil, *Dansk körvel* (Swedish), *Gartenkerbel* (German), *Gorthyfail y Gerddi* (Welsh), Honiton lace, *Kerbel* (German), *Kerblik třebule* (Czech), *Kervel* (Dutch), *Kervel'* (Russian), *Körvel* (Swedish), *Maqdunis Afranji* (Arabic), *Maustekirveli* (Finnish), *Perifollo* (Spanish), Salad chervil, *San-lo-po* (Chinese), Sweet chervil, Sweet fern, and *Tradgårdskörvel* (Swedish); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of sincerity.

Garden chervil bears some resemblance to hemlock (*Conium maculatum*).

*Cereifolium* is made up of Greek *cer-* (wax) and Latin *-folia* (leaved) components meaning 'waxen-leaved'.

The old botanical name *Chaerophyllum* was derived from two Greek words that together mean 'the leaves bring gladness'.

The ancient Greeks added garden chervil to food as a flavouring. The Roman natural historian, Pliny 'the Elder' (23-79) recorded the use of garden chervil both as a seasoning and as a cure for hiccups. Authorities tell how the Romans introduced the plant to western Europe, including Britain (although it seems that following a period of popularity there, much later in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries when it was being grown widely British enthusiasm for it waned) and during this period it was cultivated in France. The Spanish established it in Brazil in 1647.

The plant was used in Europe for strewing. In Britain it is for some authorities one of the Nine Sacred Herbs of the Anglo-Saxons. These were believed to be able to give protection against evil.

Garden chervil has the quality of enhancing the flavour of most ingredients it accompanies. It is interesting to note as a further indication of its taste that some say an alternative for fresh garden chervil is a 1:2 mixture of fresh tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus*) and garden parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*). Garden chervil is one of the herbs that has been associated for centuries with French cuisine and is one of the Lenten herbs eaten in great quantities in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries. In Japan today the young shoots and leaves are a part of the vegetarian diet eaten by Buddhist monks.

Medicinally, garden chervil juice used to form part of herbalists' treatments for jaundice, chronic skin complaints and gout and, as today, its blood-cleansing qualities were already being recognized.