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*Dryas octopetala*

[Synonyms : *Dryas chamaedrifolia*, *Dryas hookeriana*, *Dryas octopetala* var. *argentea*]

**MOUNTAIN AVENS** is a mat-forming, evergreen shrub. Native to Arctic alpine areas (particularly in northern and central Europe including Britain) it has small anemone-like, yellow-centred, white flowers.

It is also known as Alpine avens, Alpine rose, Creeping oak, *Derig* (Welsh), *Driado okpetala* (Esperanto), Dryad, *Dryade à pétales* (French), *Dryádka horská* (Czech), *Dryádka osemліstková* (Slovak), *Dryádka osemľupienková* (Slovak), *Dryádka osmiplátečná* (Czech), Eightpetal mountain avens, *Fjällsippa* (Swedish), *Silberwurz* (German), White dryad, White dryas, Wild betony, and White mountain-avens.

Mountain avens is protected in the Alps and southern European mountains. In Britain also it is considered to be an endangered species in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

*Octopetala* is derived from Latin *octo* (eight) and *petalum* (petal) components meaning ‘eight-petalled’.

The mats of mountain avens (which have a stabilizing effect on rocky debris and soil) can often extend over an area of several square meters.

In the European Alpine area the leaves used to be infused as a tea which was called *Schweitzertee*, *Kaisertee* or *Thé suisse* which has been drunk medicinally to aid digestion and has also been used to treat stomach ailments.