

Erigeron philadelphicus

[Synonyms : *Erigeron occidentale*, *Stenactis philadelphica*, *Tessenia philadelphica*]

PHILADELPHIA FLEABANE is a biennial or perennial. Native to northern North America it has small, aster-like yellow-centred, pink or purplish (sometimes white) flowers.

It is also known as Cocash, Common fleabane, Daisy, Daisy-fleabane, Field weed, Fleabane daisy, Frostroot, Frost weed, *Harujion* (Japanese), Mourning bride, Mourning widow, Philadelphia daisy, Pink fleabane, Robin's plantain, Scabish, Shevish, Skenish, Skenish fleabane, Skevish, Skevish fleabane, Squaw-weed, and Sweet scabious.

Warning – the plant's contact with sensitive skin can cause dermatitis. Some authorities also note that its consumption should be avoided during pregnancy as it can induce abortion.

The flowers are pollinated by bees, butterflies and moths.

Philadelphicus means 'of or from Philadelphia, USA'.

Hunters in some of the North American Indian Chippewa tribe believed the scent of smoking florets lured buck deer.

The plant was an ingredient in a tobacco mixture smoked by some of the Chippewa Indians.

Authorities have noted that some Indian tribes believed that cows and deer graze on the plant.

Philadelphia fleabane offered a source of medicine for several North American Indian tribes used not least to treat liver problems, rheumatism and snake bites. In varying forms it provided a remedy for headaches for members of the Okanagan-Colville, Cherokee and Meskwaki Indians, and the latter two and some of the Chippewa also used it to treat coughs. The Iroquois chose it for some lung disorders and like the Cherokee they used it on sores. It was also one of the Iroquois remedies for some of the symptoms associated with contact with poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*). The Cherokee Indians employed the plant to stem internal bleeding, and they and the Houma tribe used it to cure some period problems. For the Blackfoot it was not only a medicine for easing diarrhoea but also one that could be used during childbirth. Some of the Chippewa Indians used the plant to counter fever, and apart from remedies already mentioned the Cherokee employed it for easing some kidney disorders and fluid retention, as well as eye ailments.

It is believed that Philadelphia fleabane was introduced to England in 1778.