

Leucanthemum vulgare

[Synonyms : *Chrysanthemum ircutianum*, *Chrysanthemum lacustre*, *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*, *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* var. *boecheri*, *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* var. *pinnatifidum*, *Leucanthemum ircutianum*, *Leucanthemum leucanthemum*, *Leucanthemum praecox*, *Leucanthemum vulgare* var. *pinnatifidum*, *Matricaria leucanthemum*, *Pyrethrum leucanthemum*, *Tanacetum leucanthemum*]

OXEYE DAISY is a perennial (occasionally grown as an annual). Native to parts of Asia, to Europe (including Britain) and to Russia, it has daisy-like, white flowers with depressed yellow centres.

It is also known as *Aspygan* (Welsh), Bachelor's buttons, Big daisy, Billy button, Bishop's posy, Bozzom, Bull daisy, Bull's eye, Bull's eye daisy, Butter daisy, Caten-aroes, *Chrysanthème des prés* (French), Common daisy, Common white daisy, Cow eyes, Cow's flower, Crazy Bett, Daisy, Devil's daisy, Dog daisy, Dogblow, Drummer daisy, Dun daisy, Dunder daisy, Dundle daisy, Dutch curse, Dutch cuss, Dutch morgan, *Easbog bán* (Irish Gaelic), Elder daisy, Espibawm, European oxeye daisy, Fair-maids-of-France, Field daisy, Fried eggs, *Frühblühende Margerite* (German), *Gewitterblume* (German), *Gewöhnliche-Wucherblume* (German), Gipsy daisy, Golden daisy, Goldens, Golland, Gowan, Gowlan, *Grande-marguerite* (French), Grandmothers, Great ox-eye, Great white ox-eye, Harvest daisy, Herb Margaret, Horse blob, Horse daisy, Horse gollan, Horse gowan, Horse gowlan, Horse pennies, Hungarian daisy, *Ièrs dé boeu* (Channel Islander-Jersey Norman-French), *Johanniskraut* (German), Kellup weed, *Kopretina bílá* (Czech), *Kragblomma* (Swedish), *Králík biely* (Slovak), Large dicky daisy, *Leŭkanto ordinara* (Esperanto), London daisy, Love me, Love me not, *Magerwiesen-Margerite* (German), Maise, Maithen, Margaret, *Margarita mayor* (Spanish), *Margerite* (German), *Margherita* (Italian), *Margriet* (Dutch), Marguerite, Marguerite daisy, Mather, Maudlin daisy, Maudlinwort, Mayweed, Midsummer daisy, Monnies, Moon daisy, Moon flower, Moon penny, Moon penny daisy, Moons, Moon's eye, Mother daisy, Mowing daisy, Open star, *Päivänkakkara* (Finnish), *Pajitos* (Spanish), Pis-mire, Poor-land daisy, Poverty weed, *Prästkrage* (Swedish), Pretty maids, Rhode Island clover, Rising sun, Russian daisy, Sheriff pink, Sun daisy, *Sunnawendl* (Austrian), Thunder daisy, *Vanlig prästkrage* (Swedish), White bothen, White cap, White daisy, White goldes, White golds, White gowlan, White gull, White-man's weed, White marguerite, White ox-eye, White weed, Whiteweed golding, Whiteweed gool, Whiteweed goul, *Wiesen-Margerite* (German), *Wiesen-Wucherblume* (German), and *Wucherblume* (German); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of be patient, disappointment, good luck, obstacle, a token, and sun.

The flowers are pollinated by butterflies and bees.

Warning – large doses can cause vomiting. When eaten by cattle the plant can taint the flavour of milk.

Vulgare means 'common'.

In Somerset in southern England it was traditionally associated with the god of Thunder and often referred to as Dun daisy.

At one point in Scottish history it was felt that the oxeye daisy was infesting the cornfields and in order to get rid of it the Scots established the gool-ridings. Any farmer who was found to have castrated a ram paid the penalty with the largest gool crop.

The Greeks dedicated the daisy to Artemis (who was sometimes worshipped as a primitive birth goddess) because it was believed that the plant could be effective in curing some female problems.

In the Christian tradition the daisy was associated with both St. Mary Magdalene and St. John, whose feast days fell on the same date.

On Midsummer's Day (24th June) children in England would string the flowers together in a cockade-shape like the feathers worn in soldiers' hats, and these daisies also featured in other celebratory garlands.

In Austria, and Germany the oxeye daisy was hung in the home and on the farm to repel lightning.

As the flowers were thought to be harmful children were warned not to rub their eyes after handling them, and the blooms were mixed in with the grass and straw put down as bedding for domestic animals as it was believed the plant acted as a flea repellent.

In Italy particularly young leaves have been eaten in salads or used as a vegetable flavouring. Some authorities believe today that oxeye daisy can be viewed as a famine plant.

Oxeye daisy was known to some of the North American Indian tribes, including the Menominee who are said to have used it to treat fever. The Quileute Indians applied it to chapped hands, and the Iroquois used it for some eye problems. Both the Shinnecock and Mohican Indians took the plant as a tonic.

Medicinally, the plant was popular with herbalists as an internal treatment for many respiratory ailments eg. coughs, bronchial catarrh, asthma and whooping-cough, as well as for easing night sweats. In lotion form it was applied externally for healing bruises, ulcers and wounds. A decoction in ale was also a common folk medicine for jaundice.

It is the birthday flower for 29th October.