

*Matricaria matricarioides*

[Synonyms : *Artemisia matricarioides*, *Chamomilla recutita*, *Chamomilla suaveolens*, *Chrysanthemum suaveolens*, *Lepidanthus suaveolens*, *Lepidotheca suaveolens*, *Matricaria discoidea*, *Matricaria suaveolens*, *Santolina suaveolens*, *Tanacetum suaveolens*]

**PINEAPPLEWEED** is an annual. Native to Europe it has heads of tiny pineapple smelling, greenish-yellow flowers.

It is also known as Apple virgin, *Chwyn Afal Pinwydd* (Welsh), Disc mayweed, *Gatkamill* (Swedish), *Gatkamomill* (Swedish), *Heřmáněk terčovitý* (Czech), *Kehräsaunio* (Finnish), *Manzanilla dulce* (Spanish), Oregon weed, Pineapple mayweed, Pineappleweed chamomile, Rayless mayweed, *Rumanček diskovitý* (Slovak), *Strahlenlose Kamille* (German), and Wild marigold.

*Matricarioides* is derived from the genus name *Matricaria* and Greek *-oides* (like) components meaning ‘like plants in that genus’. (This name made sense when this species was called *Artemisia matricarioides* before it was moved to the *Matricaria* genus.)

Pineapple weed was introduced to North America and came to be known to many Indian tribes. Children of both the Okanagan-Colville Indians and the Alaskan Inuits used to eat the flower tops – and occasionally the Montana Indian tribe and the Kutenai Indians did too.

Flathead Indians dried and ground the plant for use as a preservative for meat and berries. Babies in the Crow tribe could have a perfumed cradle as it was lined with the dried, crushed plant. The dried flower heads also provided a perfume for the Montana Indian and Blackfoot tribes, and they were an ingredient in a perfume mixture used by the Cheyenne. Both the Kuskokwagmiut and Inuktitut Inuits enjoyed the scent in their steam baths, and Kutenai Indians, who used the dried leaves, also took pleasure from the scent and even made necklaces from the dried flower heads.

The plant must have been respected among the Cheyenne Indians as it played a role in their Sun Dance.

It certainly attracted its share of superstition in the Okanagan-Colville Indian tribe as members of it believed that if they buried the plant with some human hair within home range, this would prevent loved ones (or even one’s horses) from leaving or straying.

For several tribes including the Blackfoot and Montana Indian, the dried flower heads acted as an insect repellent.

Among Inuktitut Inuits the plant became a traditional seasonal indicator for harvesting cloudberries (*Rubus chamaemorus*).

Pineappleweed provided some North American tribes with medicine, including the Cheyenne (who apparently included it as an ingredient in many different mixtures) and Ute Indians and the Inuktitut Inuits. Stomach upsets were treated with it by the Flathead, Cahuilla, Costanoan and Aleut Indians, and the Kuskokwagmiut and Alaskan Inuits. The Montana Indian, Flathead, Yokia, Cahuilla and Blackfoot tribes all used it as a remedy for diarrhoea. It was a cure for intestinal discomforts in the Cherokee tribe, the Alaskan Inuits turned to it to stem internal bleeding, and both the Montana Indian and Digueño tribes prescribed it for some female problems. The Shuswap tribe used it in treatments for some heart disorders, the Digueño and Costanoan Indians chose it for easing fever (the

former as an ingredient in a mixture), and the Costanoans also used the seeds to treat infected sores. For the Alaskan and Kuskokwagmiut Inuits and the Shuswap and Flathead Indians it was also a remedy for colds – and Aleut Indians took it as a tonic.

The plant yields a yellow dye.

Medicinally, it is little used except possibly in folk medicine.