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Tanacetum cinerariifolium

[Synonyms : *Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium*, *Pyrethrum cinerariifolium*]

PYRETHRUM (English, German) is a perennial. Native to parts of Albania, Yugoslavia and adjacent islands, it has daisy-like white-petalled, yellow-centred flowers.

It is also known as *Arquarqara* (Urdu), *Aschenkrautblättrige Wucherblume* (German), Dalmatian chrysanthemum, Dalmatian insect flower, *Dalmatianpäivänkakkara* (Finnish), Dalmatian pellitory, Dalmatian pyrethrum, *Dalmatinerkrage* (Swedish), *Dalmatinisches Flohkraut* (German), *Dalmatinische Insektenblume* (German), *Gråkrage* (Swedish), Insect flower, *Mahua* (Kikuyu), *Pelitre* (Spanish), *Piretro* (Italian, Spanish), *Pyrèthre* (French), and Pyrethrum flower; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of ‘I am not changed’, and ‘they wrong me’.

Warning – prolonged human contact can cause asthma, allergic inflammation of the nasal passage and allergic dermatitis.

Cinerariifolium is made up of the genus name *Cineraria* and Latin *-folia* (leaved) components meaning ‘with leaves like those of that genus’.

A traveller, Chang Yee, is said to have suggested that if you have used your fingers to eat crab meat pyrethrum will wipe away the smell of it from the skin.

This natural insecticide can be used for fumigation in the form of a powder, lotion or spray and is not poisonous for mammals or plants. It is effective in controlling ants, aphids, bedbugs, cockroaches, flies, mosquitos and spider mites – and has the added advantage of being environmentally attractive as it does not persist and its discriminative poisonous properties enable it to be used within the home without jeopardy.

In southern Europe and the United States the plant is grown as an ornamental garden plant and is cultivated for its flowers.

Medicinally, herbalists have used the roots to treat some fevers.