



Plant of the Month

YARROW



Achillea millefolium

In Greek mythology, Achilles was a hero, a great warrior, for whom yarrow had special significance. Achilles is reputed to have used yarrow (also known as woundwort) to heal soldiers on the battlefields, fighting for dominance of Troy.

Yarrow was used as a blood coagulant, for pain relief, and as an antiseptic.

YARROW: Plant Profile

- Yarrow is part of the *Asteraceae* or daisy family
- It grows naturally in a range of habitats, including grasslands, open forests and alpine regions, throughout Europe, northern and western Asia, and most of North America.
- Yarrow is a drought tolerant, hardy, perennial herb
- Feathery leaves and many small white to pink flowers in flat clusters
- Grows to 60cm
- The low growing, spreading habit makes it useful as a groundcover
- Can be planted to prevent soil erosion
- Seeds germinate in 10-14 days at 18-22°C
- Best grown in partial shade (to protect it from very hot summers)
- Moist, well-drained soil (but can tolerate poor soil)
- It can be susceptible to mildew



YARROW: USES

Flowers and Insects

- Ideal for encouraging beneficial insects, including ladybirds, hoverflies, bees, butterflies and predatory wasps
- Cut flowers used in floral arrangements

Medicinal Properties

- Blood coagulant- poultice or powder
- Used sparingly in salad- very bitter taste!
- Yarrow combined with equal amounts of peppermint and elder flower is a traditional tea used for colds and flu

Compost and soil improver

- Biodynamics Compost Prep 502
 - Yarrow flowers are placed in a stag's bladder
 - Stimulates potassium, silica and selenium activating bacteria and helps combine sulphur with other substances
 - Remedies weaknesses in flowering and fruiting and strengthens the plant against insect attack
- Scatter a few yarrow leaves in layers through the compost bin help to activate and break down the compost

