

Common Name: **Feverfew**

Genus: *Tanacetum*

Species: *parthenium*

Family: Asteraceae

AKA: Pyrethrum Parthenium, Featherfew, Featherfoil, Flirtwort, Bachelor's Buttons



Historical Uses:

Medical:

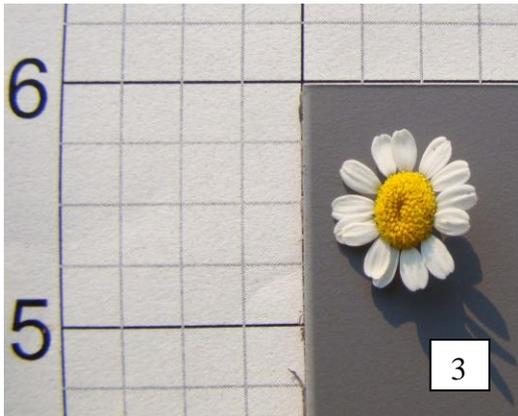
“Feverfew is moderately warm and somewhat dry. It is pure moderation and holds good qualities. It is good for a healthy person to eat because it lessens disease, augments his or her good blood, and makes a clear mind. But is also leads a sick person who is already failing seriously in the body back to strength. It does not cause indigestion, but causes good digestion. And a person who has much congestion in the head will have less congestion if feverfew is eaten frequently. Eaten often, it diminishes pleurisy, causes good humors, and clears the eyesight. In whatever way it is eaten, certainly either dry or in food, it is as useful and good for a sick person as for a healthy one. For if a person eats it frequently, sickness flees from them; it keeps the person from getting sick. However, when eaten, it draws out moisture and saliva from the mouth. It draws out bad humors and restores health.” (1)



“It’s virtue is to comfort a man’s stomach.” It is “good to assuage the access quotidian, cramp” and “to lay to a sore that is bitten by venomous beasts.... Also if it be stamped and laid to a wound in which be broken bones, it shall bring the broken bones together and heal them.” (2)

The *Hortus sanitatis* states that “the seeds eaten will

drive out worms from the body” and “drunk with wine will make a woman fruitful.” (3)

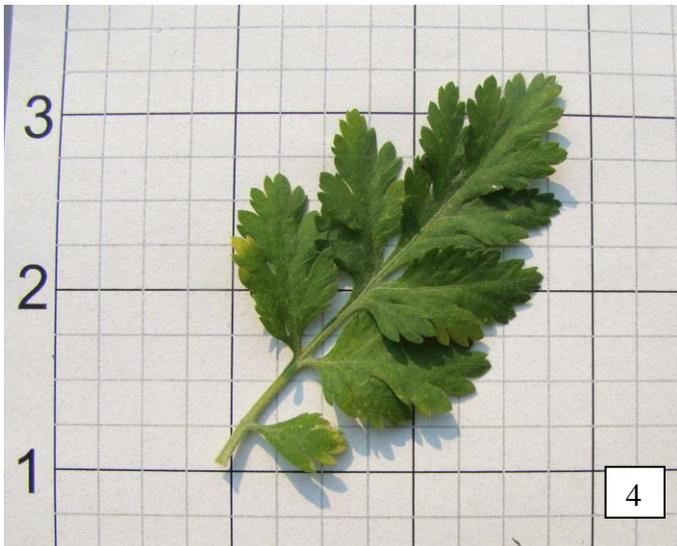


Flower on one inch grid

“Aperient, carminative, bitter. As a stimulant it is useful as an emmenagogue. Is also employed in hysterical complaints, nervousness and lowness of spirits, and is a general tonic. The cold infusion is made from 1 oz. of the herb to a pint of boiling water, allowed to cool, and taken frequently in doses of half a teacupful. A decoction with sugar or honey is said to be good for coughs, wheezing and difficult breathing. The herb, bruised and heated, or fried with a little wine and oil, has been employed as a warm external application for wind and colic.” (4)

Folklore/Astrology: Under the dominion of Venus (5)

Cautions: Handling leaves may cause dermatitis; eating leaves may cause mouth ulcers. (6)



Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Whole plant, leaves

Medicinal: *Tanacetum parthenium* (feverfew) was described in old herbals as a remedy for headaches but forgotten until the 1970s when Mrs. Anne Jenkins, a doctor’s wife in Cardiff, Wales, found that it cured her migraine and reported its effectiveness. A bitter, tonic, cooling herb with a pungent odor and nauseating taste. It relieves

pain, relaxes spasms, dilates blood vessels, lowers fever, improves digestion, stimulates the uterus, and has laxative effects. Internally for migraine, headache, rheumatism and arthritic complaints, minor feverish illnesses, and digestive and menstrual problems. Externally for insect bites and bruising. Contraindicated during pregnancy. (7)

Area of Origin: native to Europe and the Caucasus

Physical description: Strong-smelling, short-lived perennial with yellow-green, ovate, pinnately lobed leaves with clusters of daisy like flowers.

Plant type: Perennial

Form: Upright

Height: 45-60cm (18-24in)

Flower color: White

Flowering period: Summer

Soil type/requirements: Well-drained to dry, stony soil.

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-9

Sun requirements: Sun

Propagation: By seed in the spring. By division in spring or autumn. By basal cuttings in spring and by semi-ripe cuttings in summer.

Sources

1. Von Bingen, pg. 23-24
2. Freeman, pg. 24
3. Ibid.
4. Grieve, pg. 310
5. Beyerl, pg. 344
6. Bown, pg. 382
7. Culpeper, pg.

Illustrations/Images:

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| 1. Fuch's Herbal | 1543 |
| 2. PSUMG | 2012 |
| 3. PSUMG | 2012 |
| 4. PSUMG | 2012 |