

CHAMOMILE (CAMOMILE) OF LADAKH

Medicinal & Herbal Plant Profile



Scientific name	<i>Matricaria chamomilla</i> L. (syn. <i>Matricaria recutita</i> L.)
Common name	Chamomile / Camomile / German chamomile
Family	Asteraceae (Compositae)
Plant type	Annual aromatic herb
Plant part mainly used	Flower heads (capitula)
Local name in Ladakh	Not confirmed from the photograph; use the locally verified name on the final plant tag.

Identification & Description

Chamomile is a small, aromatic herb recognized by its finely divided, feathery leaves and numerous daisy-like flower heads. The flower heads have white ray florets surrounding a yellow central disc. In *Matricaria chamomilla*, the central receptacle becomes distinctly conical and hollow as the flower head matures. The plant is generally an annual herb and may reach roughly 15–60 cm depending on growing conditions.

Occurrence & Cultivation in Ladakh

Chamomile can be grown as a herbal/medicinal plant in suitable cultivated plots and school botanical gardens in Ladakh. Its growth and flowering depend on temperature, irrigation, soil condition and local microclimate. The supplied photograph shows the plant growing in a planted garden bed.

Medicinal & Traditional Uses

- **Herbal tea:** Dried flower heads are commonly prepared as a mild herbal infusion.
- **Digestive comfort:** Traditionally used for mild digestive discomfort and after meals.
- **Relaxation:** Widely used as a calming herbal beverage and in bedtime routines.

- **Skin care:** Traditionally used in gentle topical products for soothing irritated skin.
- **Aromatic use:** Flowers contain volatile oils and other phytochemicals responsible for their characteristic fragrance.

Important Phytochemicals

Chamomile flowers contain volatile oils and flavonoids. Important constituents include chamazulene (formed during processing from matricin), α -bisabolol and flavonoids such as apigenin. Composition varies with species, cultivar, growing conditions and processing.

Conservation & Sustainable Use

For a school medicinal-plant garden, maintain healthy plants for seed production and avoid uprooting the whole plant when flowers are being harvested. Collect only a portion of mature flower heads, allow some plants to complete their life cycle and produce seed, and avoid harvesting from natural populations without proper permission or sustainable-harvesting guidance.

Safety Note

Chamomile is generally used as a herbal tea or preparation, but it can cause allergic reactions in some people, particularly those sensitive to plants in the Asteraceae family. Medicinal use should not replace professional medical treatment.