

SGEG – BOTANICAL SURVEY FINDS RARE CHAMOMILE GROWING ON OUR CRICKET GREEN



Botanists from the Surrey Botanical Society inspecting our parched Cricket Green this summer were excited to find large patches of English Chamomile there – a rare and endangered species, *Chamaemelum nobile*. It was thriving even in the terrible drought we were experiencing in Shamley Green at the time. The regular mowing of this green creates the open conditions needed by this little herb, and when the grass goes brown and the mowing stops then the Chamomile bursts into flower!

Nationally it's a very scarce plant growing in the wild like this, although commercially lots is grown worldwide for its daisy - like flowers which provide essential oils for cosmetics, aromatherapy products and perfumes.

The aromatic feathery leaves can withstand trampling, so in lightly trafficked areas it is possible to actually grow it as a Chamomile lawn. The dried flowers of English Chamomile are also used to make a calming herbal tea (but commercial suppliers tend to use the slightly less bitter German Chamomile, *Matricaria chamomilla*).

For lots of information about the wild flowers growing in and around Shamley Green see the wildflower diaries on our website <https://www.shamleygreenenvironment.co.uk>