



# Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow

*Achillea millefolium var borealis*  
Selected Class Release “Natural”

## Uses: Revegetation Throughout Alaska

### Growth

Boreal yarrow is a colonizer. In Alaska it is found in meadows and fields, in both wet and dry areas. It grows on soil and gravel.

It blooms from July to September. Seeds are produced gradually, the head does not go to seed all at once. Plants are spread by rhizomes and seeds.

It is a long-lived perennial. Very aromatic, over 100 chemicals have been extracted from it. Of these lactones, flavonoids, and thujone seem the most valuable (Small and Catling, 1999).

Yarrow is in the Daisy family. Boreal yarrow closely resembles the weedy variety, *Achillea millefolium var millefolium*. To distinguish them look at the flowering head. Boreal yarrow has darker bracts underneath the white flowers.



Map from Hultén, 1968.  
Used with the permission of Stanford University Press.

Boreal yarrow's dark bract.



### Distribution

*Achillea millefolium var borealis* is native to Alaska (Kartesz, 1999). It can also be found throughout northern Canada to Maine. In Maine it is a “protected” species (USDA, 2004).

Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow seed is maintained by the Alaska Plant Materials Center for commercial production.

### Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow

Plant Identification Number: 9097721

Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow was collected by Stoney Wright near Girdwood, Alaska, in 1994 (Wright, 2005).

This native herb is a Selected Class Release by the Alaska Plant Materials Center (PMC). This means it has been grown and harvested at the PMC and continues to preserve its excellent performance.

This herb is recommended for use in revegetation because its seedlings are vigorous and provide good initial plant cover.



Alaska Plant Materials Center

Serving Alaska's needs in production of Alaska native plants

Jan. 9, 2008



# Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow

## Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow for Alaska Revegetation Purposes

Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow is ideal for seed mixes for revegetation. It provides diversity, color, and wildlife benefits. It is able to grow on poor soil and needs little surface preparation.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration, Alaska, 1998) lists boreal yarrow for roadside use in revegetation projects.



*Achillea millefolium var borealis* seed.  
~1,778,792 seeds per pound

### To Produce Twenty Mile Germplasm boreal yarrow

Yarrow is very easy to grow. Germination percent is usually high. Seeds only need to be scattered on top of the soil. They can be planted in either the fall or spring for good growth in the summer (Small and Catling, 1999).

Seedling vigor is fast and good. It grows best with irrigation, cultivation of weeds, and fertilization.

Seed can be harvested easily with normal equipment. Seed production is high for the long life of this plant.



Boreal yarrow  
seeding out.

### Interesting Notes

Yarrow's scientific genus, *Achillea*, comes from the Greek story of Achilles. It is said that Achilles used yarrow leaves to stop the flow of blood of his soldiers.

To this day, many people use yarrow for its blood clotting properties. Other traditional uses include using the leaves for tea, skin lotions, and insect repellent (Schofield, 1989).



Boreal yarrow in production at the  
Alaska Plant Materials Center, Palmer.

### References

- Hultén, E. 1968. *Flora of Alaska and Neighboring Territories*. © by the Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Jr. University, Stanford University Press, Stanford.
- Kartesz, 1999. *Achillea millefolium var. borealis*. ITIS Report. <http://www.itis.usda.gov>.
- Schofield, Janice. 1989. *Discovering Wild Plants: Alaska, western Canada, the Northwest*. Alaska Northwest Books, Anchorage, Alaska.
- Small, Ernest and Paul Catling. 1999. *Canadian Medicinal Crops*. NRC Research Press, Ottawa.
- USDA, NRCS National Plant Data Center, 2004. *Boreal Yarrow, Achillea millefolium var borealis*. <http://plants.usda.gov>.
- U.S. Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration, Alaska. *Roadside Use of Native Plants. 1998 Revised Guidance for the Native Wildflower Planting Requirement*. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rdsduse>.
- Wright, S. 2005. *Personal discussion*. Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture, Plant Materials Center, Palmer, Alaska.

**Peggy Hunt & Stoney Wright**  
State of Alaska  
Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Agriculture  
Plant Materials Center  
5310 S. Bodenbug Spur Rd.  
Palmer, AK 99645-9706  
Phone: (907) 745-4469