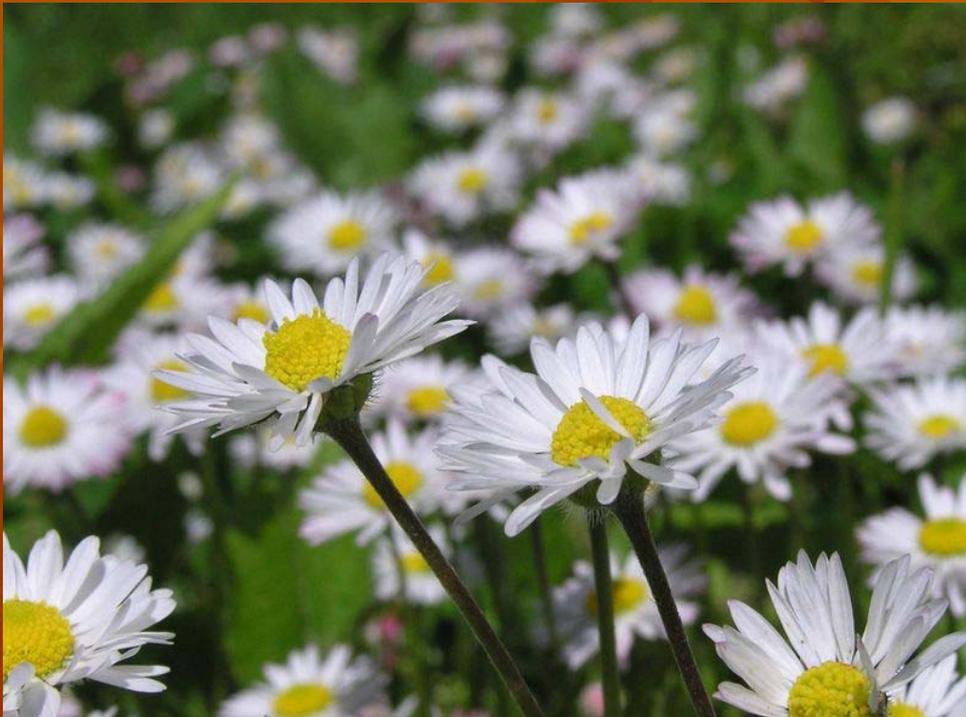


Every Plant Tells a Story

Trevor Partridge
City Botanist, CCC



Unravelling the
daisy chain

So, what's my story – the daisy?

- In Latin – *Bellis perennis* L.
- Common names – daisy, double daisy, English daisy, common daisy, lawn daisy
- Origin – Europe to West Asia. First record in New Zealand - 1867

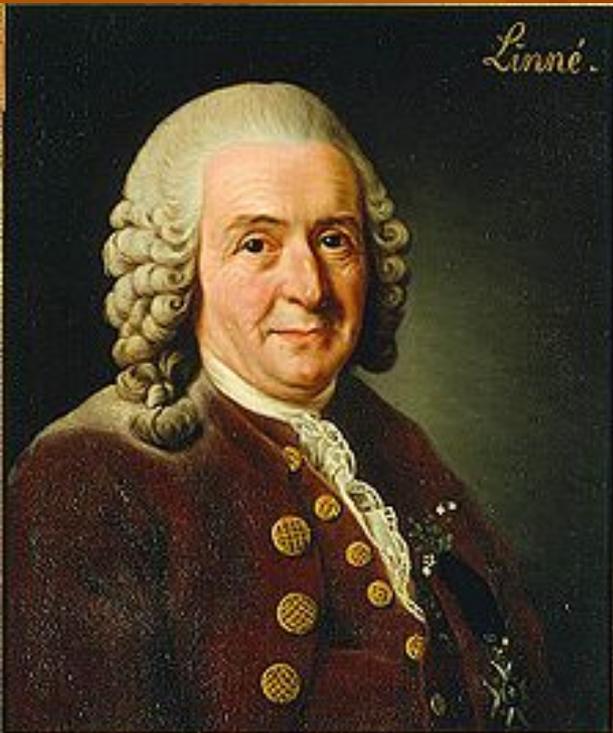
Lets Take a Look at Me



This is where you will usually find me – in a lawn with my friends ryegrass and buttercup

So what's the 'L.' for?

- L is for Linnaeus – Inventor of the binomial system of naming living things.



The 'L.' means that I was named by Linnaeus,
So I am one of the first plants formally named,
Away back in 1753.

Carl Linnaeus (Carl von Linné) 1707-1778

My Wonderful Flowers



This is not a flower,
but an inflorescence,
a whole lot of flowers
bunched together

Its called a capitulum
by the botanists



The white flowers are called
Ray florets

The yellow flowers are called
Disc florets

Where will you find me?

- Mostly in lawns, but also in pasture – I have underground stems so I am tolerant of mowing and grazing
- Also in waste places, forest margins and clearings, stream banks, seepages, cultivated land, dunes, tussock grassland
- I have gotten around in New Zealand – North and South Islands throughout, Chatham Is, and in the subantarctic on Auckland and Campbell Islands

My closest relatives

- None of the other 15 species of *Bellis* have made their way to New Zealand (as far as we know)



Bellis annua – annual daisy



Bellis sylvestris – southern daisy

My more distant relatives



Brachyscome radicata

Together in the subfamily
Astereae

This is a native plant that looks a lot like me

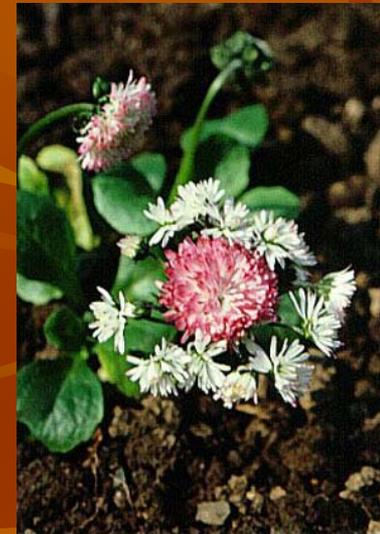
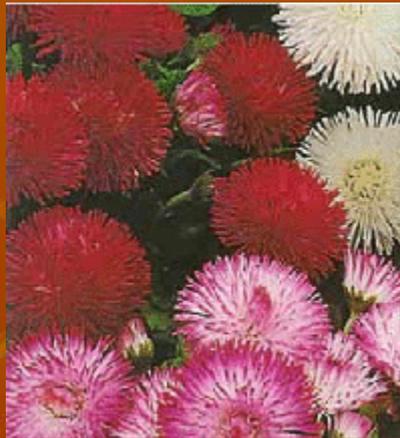
Part of the large family
Asteraceae (Compositae)

And How do the Humans View Me

- Good – Attractive flowers, astringent properties, special cultivars for gardeners and DAISY CHAINS – thankyou Zina



- Bad – “*Bellis perennis* is an extremely common lawn weed”



Some of my many cultivars – hard to believe its still me

My Plea to the Lawn Brigade

- A 'Weed' is a plant that isn't wanted in the particular place
- A 'pest plant' is a weed that has become a widespread nuisance
- Pest Plants are covered by local authorities who create regulations surrounding them
- So there is a big difference between attitude and threat in many cases

Some Real Pest Plants



boneseed



broom



aluminium plant



old man's beard



Mexican daisy – no this isn't me!

And Those that Aren't



bindweed



hawthorn



periwinkle



ivy



umbrella sedge



And I suppose I fit
here as well

So, what makes a weed a pest

- It has to threaten real values – so a lawn weed doesn't count
- It has to be declared a pest – National action list, Regional list, Nursery accord list – not on any of these
- There are rules restricting propagation – none for me
- There are rules regarding what landowners have to do – no requirements here

So, what am I

- A widespread exotic species in New Zealand
- A weed to lawn lovers who want nothing but grass
- A plant with a fascinating botanical story
- The perfect excuse for making a daisy chain

The Risk of it All Falling Apart – the Daisy's Point of View

- Have you ever seen another plant chained together like this?
- You can do this because, if you are careful, my flower stalks don't split
- And there are plenty of them throughout most of the summer
- With such attributes, how could anyone consider me a weed?
- I rest my case.