

Indigenous Plants for Ballarat Gardens



Photograph: Roger Thomas

Milky Beauty-heads

Calocephalus lacteus

FAST FACTS

Groundcover

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Family: | Asteraceae Daisy |
| Size: | 20cm H x 70cm W |
| Position: | Sunny |
| Soil: | Well drained |
| Flowers: | Spring – Autumn |
| Fruits: | Inconspicuous |
| Care: | Prune |

A spreading groundcover approximately 20cm high and up to 70cm wide, **Milky Beauty-heads** (*Calocephalus lacteus*) is an Australian native from the Ballarat area.

Location: Milky Beauty-heads like a sunny location – perhaps in a narrow bed beside the driveway, in a rockery or softening the edge of paving.

Leaves: The small soft silver-grey leaves make a wonderful contrast with other plants and add a bright touch to the garden all year round.

Flowers: Although inconspicuous, the many flowers occur in clusters at the end of each stem. They are the same colour as the leaves but add a nice pompom texture to the plant for many months over spring, summer and into autumn. The flowers and foliage stay looking good for many months.

Planting: Milky Beauty-heads are quite tough and will grow really well in the garden if planted in a hole not much larger than the pot within a few days of purchase.

Give it a good ½ bucket of water as soon as you plant it and it should be fine after that. Once settled in, it needs very little water other than natural rainfall.

Care: When you think the flowers look too old and tired, just trim the top ½ to ¾ off the plant with garden shears. The plant will thicken up and spring back into shape in no time, and do a good job of suppressing weeds in your garden bed.

Seed: When pruning, you might like to leave some of the flower stems uncut until they form papery pale grey seeds. Either let them blow away in the breeze or collect some to grow into new plants.