



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Senecio cineraria***<sup>1</sup>

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### **Introduction**

Dusty Miller is grown for its spectacular foliage, silvery-white, delicately-divided leaves covered with a very soft, dense fuzz. Reaching 12 to 18-inches in height, Dusty Miller is ideal for neat edgings, for breaking up large masses of flower color, or planted in containers where the foliage can be viewed up-close. Dusty Miller is especially dramatic when viewed at night, the silvery leaves catching and reflecting the faintest moonlight. While the small blooms are somewhat attractive, they are usually removed to encourage leaf-growth.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Senecio cineraria*

**Pronunciation:** sen-NEESH-shee-oh sin-ner-RAIR-ee-uh

**Common name(s):** Dusty Miller

**Family:** *Compositae*

**Plant type:** annual

**USDA hardiness zones:** all zones (Fig. 1)

**Planting month for zone 7:** Jun

**Planting month for zone 8:** May

**Planting month for zone 9:** Mar; Apr; May

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** Feb; Mar; Oct; Nov; Dec

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; border

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### **Description**

**Height:** .5 to 1 feet

**Spread:** .5 to 1 feet

**Plant habit:** round; upright

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

#### **Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** lobed

**Leaf shape:** oblong

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** not applicable

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** silver/gray

**Fall color:** not applicable

**Fall characteristic:** not applicable

#### **Flower**

**Flower color:** yellow

**Flower characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

#### **Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** no fruit

**Fruit length:** no fruit

**Fruit cover:** no fruit

**Fruit color:** not applicable

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable  
**Current year stem/twig color:** gray/silver  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thick

**Use and Management**

Dusty Miller should be grown in full sun or very light shade in well-drained soil and occasionally trimmed if plants become leggy. Plants are fairly drought-tolerant and should not be over-watered.

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown  
**Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

The cultivar ‘Silver Queen’ has silver-white, lacy leaves on compact, eight-inch-tall plants.

Propagation is by seed.

**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases of major concern, as long as plants do not remain too wet.

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** not applicable  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive