**Calendula officinalis**

Edward F. Gilman, Teresa Howe

**Introduction**

A hardy annual, from southern Europe, the Pot Marigold is one of the most reliable cool season annuals. Flowers are single or double and usually yellow or orange. Pot Marigold will grow one to two feet tall and require full to partial sun. As an herb the petals are much prized for their coloring and flavor. The colonists used the petals to color butter and cheese and added the dry petals to soup for flavor. In USDA hardiness zones 9b, 10, and 11, *Calendula officinalis* is generally planted in the fall for winter and spring color.

**General Information**

- **Scientific name:** *Calendula officinalis*
- **Pronunciation:** kuh-LEND-yoo-luh off-fiss-in-AY-liss
- **Common name(s):** Calendula, Pot Marigold
- **Family:** Compositae
- **Plant type:** herbaceous
- **USDA hardiness zones:** all zones (Fig. 1)
- **Planting month for zone 7:** May
- **Planting month for zone 8:** Mar; Apr; Sep; Oct
- **Planting month for zone 9:** Mar; Nov; Dec
- **Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** Feb; Dec
- **Origin:** not native to North America
- **Uses:** container or above-ground planter; mass planting; cut flowers; attracts butterflies; culinary
- **Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

**Description**

- **Height:** 1 to 1.5 feet
- **Spread:** 1 to 1.5 feet
- **Plant habit:** round
- **Plant density:** dense
- **Growth rate:** moderate
- **Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** entire
- **Leaf shape:** ovate
- **Leaf venation:** not applicable
- **Leaf type and persistence:** not applicable
- **Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- **Leaf color:** green
- **Fall color:** not applicable
- **Fall characteristic:** not applicable

**Flower**

- **Flower color:** yellow; white
- **Flower characteristic:** showy

**Fruit**

- **Fruit shape:** no fruit
- **Fruit length:** no fruit
- **Fruit cover:** no fruit
- **Fruit color:** not applicable
- **Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

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Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

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

Use and Management

Pot Marigold is useful planted in a container or 12 to 18 inches apart in a mass planting. Their bright colors draw attention to an area. They look nice as an annual groundcover in an open bed or beneath a small tree. A tree with dark bark contrasts nicely with a mass planting of Pot Marigold.


Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: not applicable
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.