



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Calendula officinalis*¹

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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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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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

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

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.

Cultivars include: ‘Bon Bon’, ‘Coronet’, ‘Fiesta Gitana’, ‘Geisha Girl’, ‘Indian Song’, ‘Kablouna’, ‘Mandarin’, ‘Pacific Beauty’.