

# *Calendula officinalis* Calendula, Pot Marigold<sup>1</sup>

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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

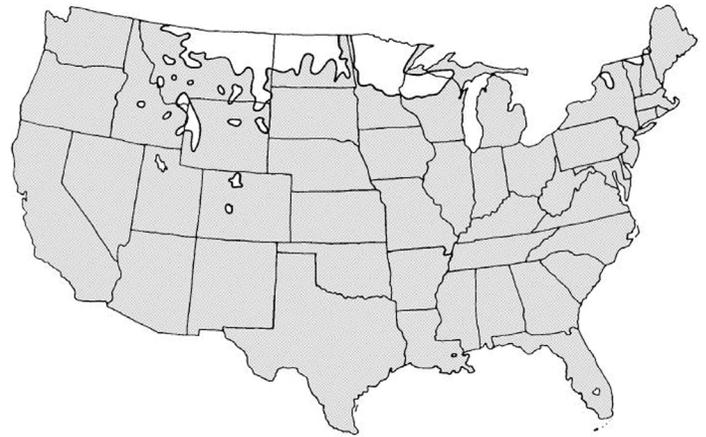


Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## 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

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**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

## 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', and 'Pacific Beauty'.