

# MeadowSweet

## Herbs & Flowers

MeadowSweet Herbs & Flowers Monthly Newsletter

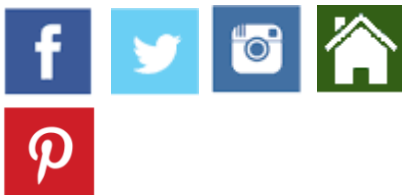
Oct 2017

### In This Issue

- Spring Garden
- Plant of the Month: Calendula
- Recipe: Calendula Sugar Scrub

### Event Dates

- ⇒ **1 Oct**, Orewa Farmers' Market
- ⇒ **3 Oct**, Hobsonville Herb Group.
- ⇒ **8 Oct**, Orewa Farmers' Market.
- ⇒ **9 Oct**, North Shore Herb Group (Essential Oils)
- ⇒ **12 Oct**, Epsom Herb Group
- ⇒ **15 Oct**, Orewa Farmers' Market
- ⇒ **19 Oct**, Four Seasons Garden Circle
- ⇒ **22 Oct**, Orewa Farmers' Market
- ⇒ **28 Oct**, Silverdale School
- ⇒ **29 Oct**, Orewa Farmers' Market



## Garden: Spring

It sure is warmer in most of the country, with some balmy days already. And our plants are rejoicing in this with a flush of new growth. Remember though that spring is still fickle, and tender plants need a bit of looking after if the elements turn—so have some protection nearby just in case.

It is most definitely planting time for almost anything right now, and the garden is full of promise. If you have not yet started your tomatoes or chillies, now is a good time to get them going before its too late...

And if you are enjoying warm weather, you can even transplant seedlings into the ground before the traditional planting day over Labour Weekend.



See my [gardening calendar](#) (attached) for more sowing and planting ideas, and follow [Week in Retrospect](#) on the blog for week by week info on growing and using plants through October.

## Plant of the Month: Calendula

Undoubtedly one of the most cheerful flowers in the herb or vegetable garden is the bright orange or yellow faces of Calendula, or Pot Marigolds. It is a brilliant multifunction plant to have in the garden—besides its unassuming beauty, it is an edible flower, a companion to vegetables, bee



friendly, and can be used as a cosmetic, medicinal and household herb too! A true historical herbal with references in Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome as well as 16th century Victorian England.

## Plant of the Month



### Uses

#### Culinary

The flower petals of calendula are edible, and make a lovely addition to any mixed salad, or as a decoration on iced biscuits or cakes. Add to herbal teas. Named “pot” marigold after the German tradition of adding it to soups and stew pots.

The flowers have been used as a saffron substitute to colour food such as rice, butter and cheese. Feeding chickens calendula petals also result in darker yolked eggs!

Why not try to streak your pasta with bright orange when you next roll home-made dough? It really looks beautiful as an open-faced lasagna.



#### Medicinal

Tea of calendula is very **nutritive**, and

is said to be great for the digestion, especially helping to detoxify the liver and gallbladder.

It is used for open **wounds** because it is antihemorrhagic and antiseptic, and promotes healing. Calendula is a common ingredient in creams for diaper rashes, eczema, dermatitis, and other **skin conditions**, as well as for burns, scalds, cuts, scrapes and abrasions.

It is **antimicrobial**, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, and astringent. It even benefits **oral** health, and is useful for women’s complaints such as PMS and hot flashes.

In **cancer** studies it has shown to be cytotoxic (antitumor) and immunomodulating.

#### Household and beauty

In the household, calendula is a dye herb, with different mordants producing yellows, oranges and browns.

#### Garden

Loved by bees and bumblebees, as well as beneficial predatory insects, it is a must-have in the vegetable garden. Even the roots increase beneficial fungal activity in the soil. It can be used as a companion plant, or pesticide spray, a soil restorative and to keep root-knot nematodes at bay.

Calendula comes from Roman ‘kalendae’ meaning ‘first day of the month’ presumably in reference to its ability to flower every month of the ‘calendar’ year.

#### Ritual

Calendula is a symbol of happiness in Roman gardens, and is held sacred in India where petals adorn statues of deities, and it was used in Aztec and Mayan

religious ceremonies. Dedicated to the Norse goddess Freya, it was used in love potion spells.

### Cultivate

Easily grown, and happy to self-seed, Calendula prefers an open and sunny position, and can flower all year long in a frost-free area. Sow seeds in spring. May suffer from mildew in hot and humid conditions. Harvest every few days and dry petals for use in herbal medicines.



## Recipe Share

### Calendula Sugar Scrub

- 1/2 cup of calendula infused sweet almond oil
  - 1/3 cup calendula infused coconut oil
  - 2 cups sugar
  - 10 drops essential oil (optional)
1. Infuse oils (separately) with calendula petals for about 2 weeks.
  2. Add sugar to coconut oil and mix well while slowly pouring in sweet almond oil and gently combine.
  3. Add essential oils if desired

Use as often as you’d like. Gently massaging it into your skin during a shower.