

Tagetes erecta

[Synonyms : *Tagetes elongata*, *Tagetes ernstii*, *Tagetes heterocarpha*, *Tagetes major*, *Tagetes patula*, *Tagetes remotiflora*]

AFRICAN MARIGOLD is an annual. Native to Mexico and Middle America it has citron yellow or orange flowers.

It is also known as *Aksamietnica rovná* (Slovak), *Aksamitník vzpřímený* (Czech), American marigold, Aztec marigold, *Banti* (Telugu), Big marigold, Dwarf African marigold, *Genda* (Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi), *Hohe Studentenblume* (German), *Isosamettikukka* (Finnish), *Ja'fari* (Arabic), Mexican marigold, *Sammetsblomster* (Swedish), *Stor tagetes* (Swedish), *Stort sammetsblomster* (Swedish), *Turukkasamandi* (Malayalam), and *Zanduga* (Sanskrit); and in flower language is said to be a symbol of vulgar minds.

Erecta means 'upright or erect'.

The Aztecs of Mexico used the flowers in remedies for coughs and dysentery. North American Cherokee Indians not only used the plant to treat eczema but also applied a yellow dye obtained from the flowers. Today the Tikuna Indians of South America use the young leaves to treat fever and also to ease pain in the eyes.

In India African marigold is used to dye cotton yellow. The plant has also been used for food colouring notably for butter and cheese.

Medicinally, the flowers have been used in India for external treatment of ulcers, and for eye diseases and piles. They have also applied the leaves to boils and used the leaf juice for earache. The Chinese use African marigold today in treatments for colds, whooping-cough and mumps.