

## ***Gaillardia pulchella* Blanket Flower, *Gaillardia*<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Introduction**

This sturdy North American native forms attractive, 12- to 24-inch-tall, rounded clumps of soft, hairy, divided leaves and single, semidouble, or double flowers held on long stems above the foliage. Appearing throughout the summer, the two- to three-inch-wide flowers are available in yellow, orange, red, or bicolors, and make excellent, long-lasting cut flowers. The brilliant blossoms are quite attractive to butterflies, and these annual flowers will normally reseed themselves quite readily.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Gaillardia pulchella*

**Pronunciation:** gay-LAR-dee-uh pul-KEL-luh

**Common name(s):** gaillardia, blanket flower

**Family:** *Compositae*

**Plant type:** annual; perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 3 through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** May; Jun

**Planting month for zone 8:** Apr; May

**Planting month for zone 9:** Mar

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** Mar

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Uses:** container or above-ground planter; cut flowers; accent; mass planting; ground cover; attracts butterflies; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### **Description**

**Height:** 1 to 2 feet

**Spread:** 2 to 3 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** open

1. This document is FPS216, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date October, 1999. Reviewed June, 2007. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** lobed; serrate

**Leaf shape:** oblanceolate; spatulate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** semi-evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** not applicable

**Fall characteristic:** not applicable

**Flower**

**Flower color:** yellow; orange; red; bicolors

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; alkaline; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Soil salt tolerances:** good

**Plant spacing:** 12 to 18 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** native plant that often reproduces into nearby landscapes

**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Suitable for growing along the beaches right on the dunes, gaillardia does best in light, very well-drained soils in full sun locations, enduring heat, sandy soil and drought extremely well.

Gaillardia shows well in a mass planting spaced two to three feet apart, as an edging plant along a walk or driveway, or as an accent in a perennial garden or in front of a shrubbery border. Do not over-water since this could induce root rot.

Cultivars include 'Yellow Sun', bright yellow blooms, and 'Red Plume', vibrant, dark red blossoms.

Propagation is by seed or root divisions planted in early spring.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.