



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Helianthus angustifolius*¹

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Introduction

Swamp Sunflower is an upright perennial that may attain a height of 4 feet or more (Fig. 1). The dark green leaves are narrowly lanceolate and may reach a length of 8 inches. They are scabrous above and pubescent beneath. This spectacular fall bloomer bears yellow flowers with dark yellow or brown disks.

General Information

Scientific name: *Helianthus angustifolius*

Pronunciation: heel-ee-ANTH-us an-gus-stif-FOLE-ee-us

Common name(s): Swamp Sunflower

Family: *Compositae*

Plant type: herbaceous; perennial; ground cover

USDA hardiness zones: 8B through 10 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 8: May; Jun; Jul

Planting month for zone 9: Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Feb; Mar; Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug; Sep; Oct; Nov; Dec

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: attracts butterflies; border; mass planting; cascading down a wall; edging

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 2 to 4 feet

Spread: 2 to 4 feet

Plant habit: spreading

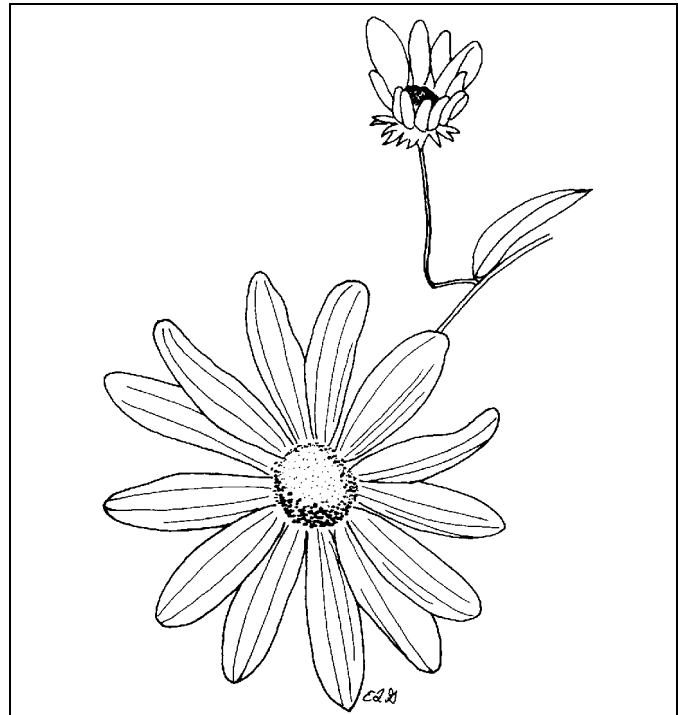


Figure 1. Swamp Sunflower.

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: dentate
Leaf shape: lanceolate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: not applicable
Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: yellow
Flower characteristic: fall flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: unknown
Fruit characteristic: attracts birds; inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems
Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; extended flooding; clay
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: good
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

The Swamp Sunflower is best used in the landscape massed together. The bright yellow color displays well against any green background. Space plants about 12 inches apart in front of a group of taller shrubs with green foliage.

Swamp Sunflower grows best in full sun to partial shade and can be planted in a well-drained soil although it is native to low wetland areas. It appears to have fairly good tolerance to planting in typical garden soil but benefits from some irrigation in dry weather. If grown in partial sun, pinch plants twice in early summer to encourage branching. These perennials respond well to regular applications of fertilizer. Many plantlets develop around the base of the Swamp Sunflower; divide it yearly to gain more plants. One may also propagate this plant by seed.

Pests and Diseases

Swamp Sunflower is susceptible to powdery mildew and spittle bugs.