

Swamp sunflower

Helianthus angustifolius

Aka Narrow-leaf Sunflower



Image source: gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu

PLANTING GUIDE

Days to maturity: 70-100 days

Spacing: 3-5ft.

Sun: Full sun to partial shade

Growing season: Perennial

OVERVIEW

This Florida native sunflower grows in low wet areas throughout the state, but also performs well in landscapes. It is sometimes called Narrow-leaf Sunflower, which describes its long, narrow leaves that are rough like sandpaper. However, the plant is better known for its tall stems that display profuse numbers of golden yellow flowers in late summer and fall. It is root hardy in areas across the southeastern United States, and spreads by underground rhizomes to form large clumps.

BENEFITS

Attracts pollinators.

GROWING & MAINTENANCE

Like other sunflowers, this plant performs best in full sun. Plants grown in partial shade will not produce as many flowers, will become leggy and may fall over without support. As its name implies, the Swamp Sunflower thrives in moist areas, but will also thrive in well-drained garden soils if watered during dry spells. You can cut the plant back in early June to make it bushier when it blooms later in the year. Then cut back the dead stems after flowering to maintain a neater appearance. Root masses can be divided in spring or autumn.

SEED COLLECTION

Carefully cut the dried and dying flower heads from the plant. Hold the seed-filled flower head over a tray, or container to catch the falling seeds. Gently brush and pull your fingers over the seeds. Pluck and wiggle any stubborn seeds out. Remove any debris from the seeds such as plant matter, dried leaves, petals, and stalk. Clean the seeds from any pollutants and small bugs. Air dry thoroughly. Store the seeds in sealed paper bags, envelopes, sealed plastic bags or containers. Store in a dry place.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

Under ideal conditions - full sun, fertile soil and abundant water - narrow-leaved sunflowers will spread by its rhizomes and may make a nuisance of itself.

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