



Photo: Janine Willis

**Scientific Name:**

Helianthus annuus

**Common Names:**

Common Sunflower

**Plant Type:** Annual, Self-Seeding Annual

**Light Requirements:**

Full Sun

**Height:** 3-10 ft, depending on variety

**Bloom Time:** Mid-Late Summer

**Hardiness Zone:** 2-11

## Sunflower

Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is an annual plant in the Aster family (Asteraceae). It is extremely popular in the late summer garden. Native to North America, sunflowers have been grown for over a thousand years. They are commonly used as ornamental plants, but they can also be harvested for seeds, oil, and dyes.

There are many different varieties of sunflowers with a wide range of different heights, colors, and flower forms. Sunflowers attract many different pollinators in search of nectar (bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds) as well as many species of birds that enjoy the seeds. There are some varieties of sunflowers that are specifically bred to be pollenless, which are popular in the cut flower industry. If growing sunflowers to attract pollinators, be sure to plant open-pollinated varieties that produce pollen. For more information about different sunflower varieties for pollinators, visit some of the links below.

In the Beautification Program gardens, sunflowers are considered a self-seeding annual. This means that the plant forms seeds that drop in the garden (or scattered by foraging birds) and a new generation of plants grows each year. The exact varieties of the sunflowers in our gardens is unknown, as they have been self-seeding in their locations for many years. Due to the height of some of our plants, we occasionally need to cut some down if they are obstructing the view of signage or traffic.

### References:

<https://hgic.clemson.edu/lets-grow-sunflowers/>

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/helianthus-annuus/>

<https://extension.umn.edu/flowers/sunflowers>

<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/>

<https://www.greatsunflower.org/>