

Heliopsis helianthoides - Oxeye Sunflower



Native to the tallgrass prairies, fields, and woodland edges of North America, oxeye sunflower, also known as false sunflower, is a short-lived, bushy perennial, growing 3-5 feet tall and 4 feet wide. Single, bright gold, daisy-like flowers surrounding brownish-yellow disk centers bloom June through August. This is one of the first yellow daisies of summer to bloom.

Hardy to USDA zone 3 (-40 degrees F), oxeye sunflower grows best in well-drained, moist to dry soil in sun to part sun. Support may be necessary if plants receive shade during the day. Division of plants every 3-5 years is recommended as plants are short-lived. Deadheading extends bloom time; plants will self-seed if not deadheaded. For delayed bloom cut back plants by one-half before flowering, preferably in late May. Oxeye sunflower will bloom two weeks later.

Butterflies are attracted to the nectar of oxeye sunflower flowers. Allow some plants to stand without deadheading the spent blooms so goldfinches may eat the seeds in August. Red aphids may attack plants, beginning in May. Hose aphids off plants with a strong water spray. Beneficial soldier beetles also can deter aphid presence on plants. Oxeye sunflower is a good cut flower.