

SWAMP/NARROW-LEAVED SUNFLOWER

Helianthus angustifolius

By Helen Hamilton, *President of the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS*

Swamp sunflower produces a striking bold fountain of three-inch golden daisy-like flowers, resembling black-eyed Susan with purple-black disks. Blooming from August through October along with wild ageratum, the blue and gold 3-6-foot tall flowers look wonderful against any green background such as tall shrubs. Butterflies love the nectar, and later the seeds are eaten by many eastern birds.

Since the plant branches freely, and blooms profusely, swamp sunflower is best used in masses in the landscape. Growing best in full sun, and well-drained soil, it is native to low wetland areas, and may need some irrigation in dry weather. This plant is doing well in tidewater, even with the current dry conditions.

The narrow leaves are stiff and alternate on the stem, but usually appear opposite lower on the plant.

Native range for swamp sunflower is from Long Island to southern Indiana.

Expect to find a lot of “volunteers” as this plant self-sows freely. Also, many plantlets develop around the base of the plant, providing a growing clump. Plants are easily propagated by dividing offspring.. ❖

