Town & Country gardens

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower

Heliopsis helianthoides 'Prairie Sunset'



Prairie Sunset False Sunflower flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: Oxeye Daisy, Perennial Sunflower

Description:

Long blooming season with exceptional heat and drought tolerance; bright yellow flowers with dark red centers and brown eyes stand tall on dark purple stems; interesting green foliage with purple veins; prefect for borders, container and cutting gardens



Prairie Sunset False Sunflower in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower has masses of beautiful gold daisy flowers with dark red centers at the ends of the stems from late spring to mid fall, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive serrated oval leaves remain forest green in color with distinctive deep purple veins throughout the season. The deep purple stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 30 inches apart. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. The flower stalks can be weak and so it may require staking in exposed sites or excessively rich soils. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selection of a native North American species. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Prairie Sunset False Sunflower is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden. Be aware that in our climate, most plants cannot be expected to survive the winter if left in containers outdoors, and this plant is no exception. Contact our experts for more information on how to protect it over the winter months.