

## Beach Sunflower

### *Helianthus debilis*

#### Plant Description:

Beach Sunflower, also known as Dune Sunflower, is an attractive Florida native that grows on our coastal sand dunes but is also perfect for landscapes! It is a spreading perennial with small, sunflower-like flower heads that attract butterflies and bloom continuously in frost-free areas. In areas that freeze, plants die back to the ground and either re-sprout from the roots or reseed in the garden. This plant makes a wonderful, drought-tolerant groundcover that requires virtually no care at all.

Mature Size: 2 to 4 feet tall and wide

Growth Rate: Fast

Plant Habit: Spreading

Plant Spacing: 18 to 24 inches

#### Ornamental Characteristics & Uses:

Foliage Color: Green

Flower Color: Yellow

Bloom Time: Spring – Fall (Year-round in frost-free areas)

Attracts Wildlife: Butterflies

Uses: Groundcover; Mass Planting; Edging; Cascading down a wall or container



## Growing Requirements:

Cold Hardiness Zone(s): 8b – 10

Exposure: Full Sun; Partial Sun

Water Needs: Low

Soil Tolerances: Extremely Drought Tolerant; Does Not Tolerate Wet Soils

Soil pH: Acidic to Alkaline

Maintenance: Easy/Low



## General Care & Growing Tips:

Beach Sunflower spreads quickly by runners and reseeds to quickly fill in an area, making it an ideal groundcover. While this plant may require occasional irrigation along the beach, over-irrigation in other locations can quickly cause plant decline. One or two applications of fertilizer during the year will encourage new plants to establish and cover the ground quickly, but after establishment require little to no fertilizer. Planting in full sun on well-drained, sandy soils will help ensure best performance. Varieties and cultivars may be available in the nursery trade, offering flowers of different shades including copper-red, chestnut-orange, rose-pink, purple-violet, and deep yellow.

**Common Pests:** No pests or diseases are of major concern.

**Reference:** Gilman, E. F. and Park Brown, S. (1999). *Helianthus debilis: Beach Sunflower*. University of Florida <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fp245>

**Photo Credit:** Alicia Lamborn