

ox-eye sunflower *Heliopsis helianthoides*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Asterales

Family: Asteraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Ox-eye sunflower is also known as ox-eye. This perennial plant has short, arrowhead-shaped, toothed leaves arranged in pairs on the smooth stem. Some of these plants have smooth leaves while others have rough leaves. A leaf may be as much as six inches long and two and one-half inches wide. A single flower head is produced at the stem tip. Both yellow ray flowers and disk flowers are present in the flower head. Each flower head may be one and one-fourth to two and one-half inches in diameter. The one-seeded fruit is dry and hard. Ox-eye sunflower may attain a height of two to five feet.

BEHAVIORS

Ox-eye sunflower may be found statewide in Illinois. It grows in open woods, thickets and moist and dry prairies. Flowers are produced from July through August. Ox-eye sunflower is an important food plant for grazing animals of the prairie.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

coniferous forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; edge

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