

# Helianthus annuus



Image Credit:

[Bruno Bolognese](#)

**Scientific name:** *Helianthus annuus*

**Common name(s):** Sunflower

**Name as shown in Phylogenies:** Sunflower

**Ploidy:** Diploid

**Description:**

*Helianthus annuus*, also known as the sunflower, is an annual inflorescence forb plant from the Asteraceae family, that is, symbolically and historically deeply rooted in the various social cultures and festivities worldwide. Its binomial name derives from the plant's vibrant, golden yellow inflorescences resemblance to our sun, and the Greek word *helios* meaning 'sun'.

Sunflower is a dicot, native to North America, is adapted to a wide variety of environments, and is drought tolerant. It is an important global crop species and primarily grown for its seeds which are used to produce cooking oils.

Historically, the sunflower has been used as a model for floret pattern formation, hybrid speciation, and adaptive introgression. Today, the sunflower continues to be an experimental system for understanding solar tracking, inflorescence development, diversity breeding by trait selection, stress resistance, and understanding gene regulatory networks involved in control of flowering time architecture and seed oil metabolism.

**Reference(s):**

1. Badouin H, et al. The sunflower genome provides insights into oil metabolism, flowering and Asterid evolution. *Nature*. 2017 Jun 1;546(7656):148-152. doi: [10.1038/nature22380](https://doi.org/10.1038/nature22380).

**Genome Database(s):**

[Sunflower Genome Database](#)