

# Become a Scientist This Summer With The Sunflower Community Project!

<http://thesunflowerproject.weebly.com/>

## What is the Sunflower Community Project?

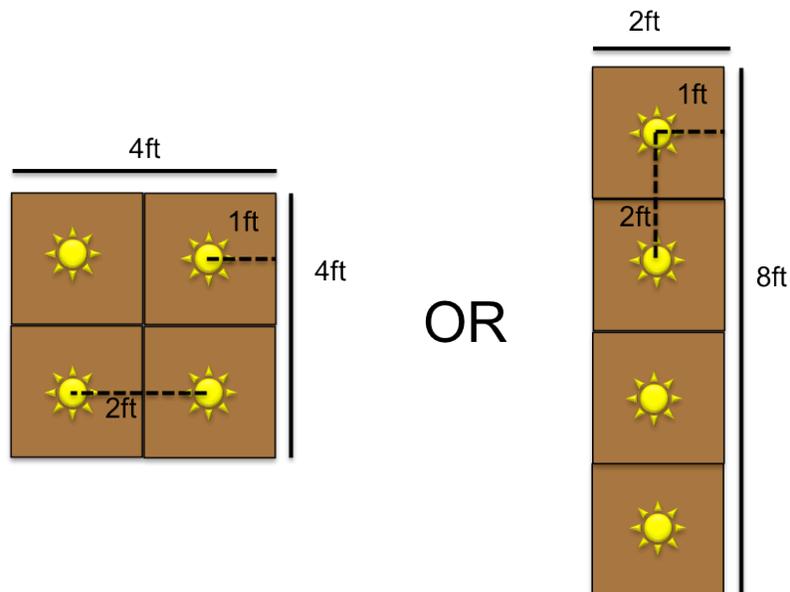
The Sunflower Community Project is a new citizen science project out of CU Boulder looking at how native sunflowers have adapted to urban and rural environments. In citizen science, scientists and the public work together to answer a research question.



Local gardeners will be asked to plant sunflower seedlings in their community garden plots around Boulder, CO and take simple measurements on the plants throughout the summer and fall. In the fall, citizen scientists will also be asked to photograph and report interactions of local animals (birds, insects, etc.) with their sunflowers.

## What We're Looking For

We're looking for local gardeners to plant 4 Common Sunflowers in their gardens in early May and take basic measurements on each plant through September/October 2014. We will provide sunflower seedlings to each gardener to plant as well as all necessary data collection equipment and worksheets. Volunteers will need 16 ft<sup>2</sup> of garden space free to plant sunflowers (see possible layouts below). Once the sunflowers have been planted, gardeners can allow other plants to grow beneath the sunflowers. We also ask volunteers for permission to visit their gardens and take simple measurements such as light levels, soil moisture, and collect insect samples once per month. Monthly training workshops and assistance will be provided throughout the project.



Possible Sunflower Layouts in Garden

### **Why Study Sunflowers?**

As humans change our landscape and cities grow, the diversity of native plants and animals in urban areas decreases. Loss of native diversity often accompanies more pollution, habitat loss, higher temperature, and more invasive, nonnative species. However, some native plants – such as the Common Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.) – are able to survive and thrive in cities despite these difficulties. How do sunflowers survive in cities? Do they help other animals survive by providing food and shelter? By studying sunflowers in urban environments like Boulder, CO, we aim to explore these questions with the help of the local community.

### **Benefits of Participating**

- Contribute to our knowledge of local flora and its effect on the ecological community
- Access private educational programs (lectures, workshops, etc.) provided by CU researchers
- Learn more about native flowers, local ecology, and science research
- Connect with other citizen scientists
- Have fun!

### **How to Get Involved**

To get involved please fill out the interest form on our website. The website will also be updated with the most recent news about the project.

<http://thesunflowerproject.weebly.com/>

### **Contacts**

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