

“National Challenge: Commemorative Coin – American Icons”

Scientific and Common Name & Personal Reflection

I chose helianthus (also known as a sunflower) for my design because no flower can lift someone’s spirits quite like a sunflower. They are bright and cheery, and as warm and inviting.

With brilliant yellow petals, these flowers have an unmistakable sun-like appearance. Sunflowers symbolize adoration, loyalty and longevity. Much of the meaning of sunflowers stems from its namesake, the sun itself.

Importance In Region

Sunflowers originated in the Americas in 1,000 B.C and were then cultivated as a valuable food source for centuries. Their origins are attributed to all of North America, making it a great choice for this commemorative coin. With the European exploration of the New World, the flower’s popularity spread, as the rest of the world began to appreciate its beauty and sustenance. Wild sunflowers are often photographed with their tall stalks and bright petals stretched towards the sun. This interesting behavior, known as phototropism, inspired a motif that has appeared in many ancient works.

Today, sunflowers remain a highly recognized flower, admired for its sunny charm and delightful disposition. These beauties are also still sourced for their seeds, as well as oils used for cooking and skin emollients. For a flower that reflects so many of the sun’s positive characteristics, it isn’t surprising that people enjoy basking in the sunflower’s warming glow so much.

Bibliography

Sunflower Sections - A division of
Nuflowers, <https://www.sunflowerselections.com/product-category/all-colors/>

Sunflower Association- The American Society of
Agronomy, <https://www.sunflowernsa.com/all-about/history/>