



***Lobelia cardinalis* – Cardinal Flower**

COMMON NAME: Cardinal Flower, Cardinal Lobelia

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Lobelia cardinalis* -honoring Matthias de l'Obel, early 17th century Flemish herbalist.

FLOWER COLOR: Intense crimson red. There are also white and pink forms. The individual flowers are 1-2 inches occurring in a large spike of 20 or more flowers.

BLOOMING PERIOD: Late July to early September

SIZE: 3 – 5 ft.

BEHAVIOR: Cardinal flower is such a short-lived perennial it often seems more like a biennial. Unless site requirements are fully met, the planting may soon die out.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Grows naturally in southern Wisconsin in moist soils in wet forests, along creeks, streams and rivers. Will grow in full sun if adequately watered, but does best in light shade. In the garden it does not require a permanently wet site, but should be watered frequently, especially during drought.

SPECIAL FEATURES: The bright color. It is a hummingbird flower.

NATURAL RANGE: Native to eastern Canada, Maine to Florida, west to Minnesota and the southern U.S. to California.

SUGGESTED CARE: Water frequently and do not let the soil dry out completely. Be sure to scatter seeds where older plants have bloomed so there will be a new crop of blooming plants in subsequent years. Annual division of the crown will also help keep plants blooming for several years.

COMPANION PLANTS: Swamp milkweed, spotted water-hemlock, large blue lobelia, monkey flower, bristly buttercup, water parsnip, blue vervain, wild iris, swamp rose.