

## ***Lobelia siphilitica* – Great Blue Lobelia**

COMMON NAME: Great Blue Lobelia

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Lobelia siphilitica* – Named for a Flemish herbalist, Matthias de L’Obel (1538-1616) who is credited with the first attempt to organize plants according to their botanical characteristics rather than their medical uses. *Siphilitica* because it was once thought to cure syphilis.

FLOWER: Tubular blue flower with two upper lobes and 3 lower lobes

BLOOMING PERIOD: July to end of September

SIZE: Medium size plant 3-4 feet tall

BEHAVIOR: Each stalk has several of the blue flowers. These tubular flowers have white stripes on the outside of their throats.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Full sun or partial shade where there is constant moisture. Found along stream banks, wet meadows, lakeshores.

NATURAL RANGE: Most parts of the U.S. east of the Rocky Mountains. It is found in all of Wisconsin except for the far northern counties.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Lovely deep blue flowers blooming late in the summer that are attractive to hummingbirds, bumble bees and other insects. Most mammals avoid this plant because the foliage contains toxic alkaloids which cause symptoms resembling nicotine poisoning.

SUGGESTED CARE: Easy to grow. Provide sufficient moisture.

COMPANION PLANTS: Marsh milkweed, boneset, wild iris, angelica, turtlehead, spotted Joe-pye weed, Riddel’s and swamp goldenrods, white aster, fringed gentian and nodding ladies’ tresses.