

# Great Blue Lobelia

August 2025 RCE Hunterdon  
Educational Garden Plant of the  
Month: Great Blue Lobelia



Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*) is an easy to grow perennial with a profusion of vibrant blue to blue-violet flowers that bloom from July to October. It is native to eastern and central North America. In natural areas, the wildflower can be found in low, wet meadows, open woodlands, and along stream banks. In the home landscape, Great Blue Lobelia grows well in moist soil with occasional flooding making it ideal for rain gardens, pond edges, naturalized gardens, or wetland restorations. It thrives in areas of dappled sun or partial shade but can adapt to sunnier areas if enough moisture is available. Propagation is by seed, vegetative cuttings, or clump division. Seeds need cold stratification and light to germinate. The upright plant stems grow three to four feet tall and are topped by racemes of brightly colored one inch flowers. The flowers attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds for nectar and pollen. Blue flowers make a beautiful backdrop for smaller wildflowers with similar bloom times. Great Blue Lobelia pairs well with other moisture-loving perennials such as Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), and Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*) bringing beauty and ecological diversity wherever it is planted.

Great Blue Lobelia has a bitter taste due to the alkaloids that it contains which may deter deer or rabbits from browsing. Rutgers Deer Resistant Rating is B: seldom severely damaged.

Credit: Irene S., RMG of Hunterdon County  
Photos: Eric B., RMG of Hunterdon County

