

Native  
Riparian  
Plant

# GREAT BLUE LOBELIA

*Lobelia siphilitica*



## About

Great Blue Lobelia is beautiful to admire, but be warned, as it is potentially poisonous to eat! Its leaves are emetic, causing nausea or even vomiting. Don't let this discourage you from adding this native, water-loving plant to your shoreland. It will stand out during July - September with beautiful bright, violet-blue flowers. This species is considered to be a short-lived perennial, but will self-seed in proper conditions to replace lost plants.



## Identification

- Grows up to 60-90 cm tall, and reaches 30 - 45 cm in width
- Leaves are oval-toothed and alternately arranged
- Leaves reach up to 13 cm long and 5 cm wide
- Leaves grow smaller as the stalk rises
- Flowers are tubular, violet-coloured with white patches
- Flowers have two lips, with the upper lip having two segments facing upwards and the lower lip having three lance shaped lobes pointing downwards

### References

Great Blue Lobelia developed by [Credit Valley Conservation Authority](#).

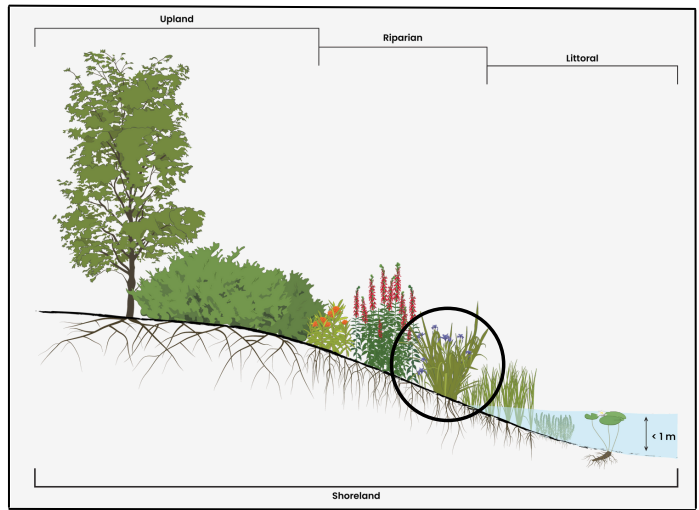
Grow me instead produced by [Alberta Invasive Species Council](#) Lobelia siphilitica by [the University of Texas](#).

Great Blue Lobelia developed by [the Missouri Department of Conservation](#).

A Guide to Local Native Plants by [Essex Region Conservation Authority](#).

# Where is this species found in the shoreland?

Great Blue Lobelia is found in the riparian zone of the shoreland, as shown in the diagram. This species thrives in water up to 7 cm deep and is **not** drought tolerant.



**Did you know** that Great Blue Lobelia is juglone tolerant? Juglone is a substance that is produced by plants such as the Black Walnut tree. It inhibits and stunts the growth of other plants living around or underneath the juglone producing plant.



## Benefits

- Attracts native bees, hummingbirds and butterflies with its blooming flowers
- Food source for birds and small mammals as they eat the seeds
- Stabilizes soil and prevents erosion along the shoreline
- Aesthetically pleasing flowers for shoreline gardens
- Tolerant to deer grazing as the foliage contains toxic alkaloids



## Don't weed me!

It is all too common for native plants to be weeded on shoreline properties. Plants such as the Great Blue Lobelia may grow unexpectedly but should be allowed to flourish. However, invasive species should be weeded if found on your property. The Great Blue Lobelia may be confused with an invasive look-alike called Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). Both species feature bright, purple colours and grow along shorelines. A key distinguishing feature is that Purple Loosestrife features opposite or whorled leaves and a square, woody stem.