



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Cardinal Flower or Lobelia

Lobelia cardinalis

DESCRIPTION: This evergreen perennial forms low clumps putting up 2' to 3' tall flower stalks. It is somewhat short-lived, but the clump may spread by underground stems. It also may spread by the abundant seed it produces. Flowers are tubular, 1" to 2" long, and deep red in color. Blooms are produced as early as mid-spring, but best bloom occurs during summer months here in southern Arizona. Flowers are a good nectar source for butterflies and hummingbirds. Cardinal Flower is native throughout much of North America. It is found along the margins of streams and cienegas.

RECOMMENDED USE: Use Cardinal Flower to attract wildlife, in aquatic gardens, or in a mini-oasis. It can be used for color, a low border or as a ground cover.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: At least to 20°F, and will come back from the roots if frozen.



Sun tolerance: Can take full sun with "wet feet", but does better in light to medium shade.



Watering and feeding: Moderate to high water use, depending on exposure to sun and soil type. It can grow with roots in the water but do not submerge the crown. Feed 2-4 times during the growing season.



Soil requirements: Sandy to loamy soil that drains.



Pruning: Cut back flower stalks when blooming has ceased.