



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Mexican Lobelia

Lobelia laxiflora

DESCRIPTION: Mexican Lobelia is a plant that can look lush and happy no matter where it is. The narrow pointed leaves are a shiny, rich green which is set off by hints of red in the petioles and stems. In mild winters Mexican Lobelia is evergreen. It spreads slowly by underground rhizomes forming a lush-looking mound even in hot, drier locations. The flowers are red tubes that flare at the tip to reveal yellow insides. The tubes are a couple inches long, and are held out from the main stem. The hot red and yellow color nestled in among clean green is attractive up close and from a distance. Flowering seems to come in flushes, in early summer, another in fall, and sometimes more in mid-summer. In milder climates it seems to go on even longer. Native to Arizona and Mexico, the Mexican Lobelia entices gardeners and hummingbirds alike.

RECOMMENDED USE: Use for its foliage and flowers in shade or sun. Good for a mini-oasis or water feature.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: It will survive quick dips in the temperatures below 20°F. In hard frosts, the plant will be frozen back to the crown, but it comes back quickly in the spring. For colder areas pile mulch around the base in winter.



Sun tolerance: In deep shade, the stems can get floppy and flowering is much reduced, but the plant is still nice-looking. It looks its best in morning sun locations.



Watering and feeding: Some sources say it is somewhat drought tolerant once established. We find it does well with regular irrigation. Don't plant in waterlogged soil. Fertilize twice yearly with a complete plant food.



Soil requirements: Most soils (other than caliche) will do.



Pruning: It can be cut to near the ground and/or divided in the spring.