



# 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.