

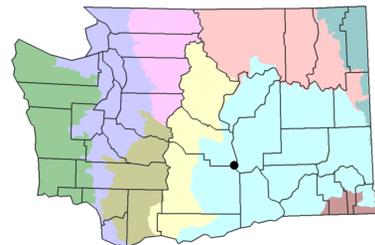
***Lobelia kalmii* L.**

Kalm's lobelia

Campanulaceae - harebell family

status: State Endangered, BLM strategic, USFS strategic

rank: G5 / S1



General Description: Perennial herb of wet places, stems sometimes branched, 1-4 dm tall. Basal leaves spatula-shaped, flat, 1-3 cm long, often deciduous. Stem leaves narrower, linear to oblanceolate, mostly 1-5 (7) cm x 1-5 (8) mm.

Floral Characteristics: Racemes loose and few-flowered; pedicels commonly with 2 bractlets near the middle. Calyx lobes narrowly triangular, sharply pointed, mostly 2-4 mm long. Flowers 7-13 mm long, mostly blue with a white or white and yellow eye (sometimes entirely white); the lower lip hairless and mostly longer than the corolla tube, which is entire except for a deep fissure above. Flowers late July through August.

Fruits: Capsules 4-8 x 3-4 mm, the apex free from the hypanthium. Seeds less than 1 mm long, roughened, pointed at both ends.

Identification Tips: The genus *Lobelia* has pedicellate flowers, which distinguishes it from *Downingia*. *L. kalmii* is distinguished from *L. dortmanna* by the presence of stem leaves, its ability to grow where there is little or no standing, open water, its flat basal leaves, and its seeds, which are pointed at both ends.

Range: Most of Canada, south to NJ, PA, IL, SD, MT, and ID. Disjunct in WA, known from 1 extant site and one historical reference that has not been relocated.

Habitat/Ecology: Sphagnum bogs, stream and lake shores, wet meadows, seeps and springs, and other wet places, often associated with calcareous substrates. In WA the plant grows in a seep within a large perennial spring complex, surrounded by shrub steppe habitat. The vegetation is highly diverse, consisting of a tangled mat of herbs, forbs, and grass species, with intermittent shrubs. Several other uncommon plants are present, including giant helleborine (*Epipactis gigantea*), porcupine sedge (*Carex hystericina*), beaked spike-rush (*Eleocharis rostellata*), and shining flatsedge (*Cyperus bipartitus*). Elevation: 170 m (550 ft).

Comments: The WA site has been degraded from past livestock use, and is dependent upon the steady flow of a natural spring. This species is also rare in several states, Alberta, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

References: Parish et al. 1996.



Illustration by John H. Rumely,
©1955 University of Washington
Press



© Eleanor Saulys



photo by Debra Salstrom