



photo: Brundage, Stephanie, 2018

## Cardinal Flower

## *Lobelia cardinalis*

- 2-5 ft tall, native NJ & most of North America, short-lived perennial
- Spikes of red flowers August - September
- Wet to average soil, sun to shade, or even deep shade
- Good rain garden plant, attracts butterflies and hummingbirds
- Tolerates clay, deer, Propagates easily from seed
- Basal rosette of leaves is evergreen, avoid leaf/mulch cover in winter
- Self-seeds readily, and sprouts new rosettes at base of plant
- Collect ripe seed spikes when brown, September to November
- Dry seeds briefly, then shake vigorously in a bag to release seeds
- Store seeds cold and dry to maintain dormancy
- Sow seeds in pots indoors or outdoors in a garden bed in fall
- Press seeds firmly into moist soil surface, do not cover with soil
- Treat seeds 6 weeks moist at 40°F to break dormancy
- Move to 70°F with light in spring, indoors or out, to germinate