

# Lupinus polyphyllus

Invasive to Maine

Lupine  
Bigleaf Lupine

Upland  
Road sides, Waters edge, Developed Areas

## Leaves



VS user Parkway5, Camden Rockport Middle School



Look for leaves that are alternate and compound-palmate with 9 to 17 lance-shaped leaflets that are 3-15 cm long. The leaves are smooth on top and hairy on bottom.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 LANCE-SHAPED	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

## Plant



VS user BlueHillGardener



Lupine is a herbaceous (nonwoody), perennial (living three or more years) plant. The flowers grow on 1.5 m tall spikes and are usually blue to purple in the wild.

## Stem



Flickr user Flominator



Look for stems that are unbranched, short, and hollow. Lupine stems are usually smooth.

## Seasonal Change



Lamontagne, Biddeford HS & band1663, Madawaska MS



Lupine flowers bloom in May and June. The seeds of the plant are in hairy pods that mature in late summer. The seeds spread when the pods open explosively.

## Similar Species

Lupine can be confused with steplebush. However, steplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*) flowers are "fuzzy" while lupine flowers are smooth with no hairs. Also, steplebush leaves are toothed while lupine leaves are smooth.

## Did You Know?

Lupine is typically a bitter-tasting weed. Some cultivated varieties of lupine have been bred to be sweeter for use as a food crop for animals. Lupines also symbolize imagination in the flower world!