

## LUPINE

*Lupinus*



More than 80 lupine species have been listed as growing wild in California. The name *lupinus* means wolf. It was chosen as a result of the mistaken notion that lupines rob the earth because they are usually found growing in poor soils. The opposite is true. They fix nitrogen in their roots and release it when they die, enriching the soil and preparing the way for other plants which need more nutrients. Lupines are often called bluebonnets because of the color and shape of their blossoms.

Among lupines seen locally are:

Miniature or Dwarf Lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*) a dainty plant that grows 6 to 8 inches high and has blue flowers trimmed with white; and

Arroyo Lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*) a stout plant that grows to two feet high, has flower spikes that are 6 to 8 inches in length, blue blossoms with white markings, and foliage covered with soft hairs;

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