

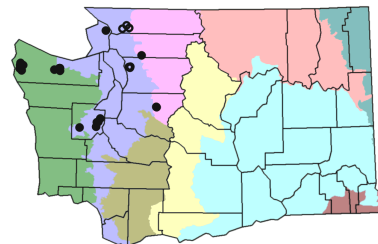
***Lobelia dortmannia* L.**

water lobelia

Campanulaceae - harebell family

status: State Threatened, BLM strategic, USFS strategic

rank: G4G5 / S2



General Description: Submerged aquatic perennial, hairless, up to 1 m tall, with the inflorescence generally extending out of the water; stem usually solitary, hollow, mostly unbranched. Leaves cylindrical, hollow, in a basal rosette. Stem leaves few, inconspicuous, reduced to threadlike bracts.

Floral Characteristics: Raceme generally emergent; pedicels without bractlets. Flowers few, 1-2 cm long, pale blue or white. Corolla irregular, the 3-lobed lower lip hairy at the base and nearly as long as the tube; corolla tube entire except for a deep split above. Calyx lobes deltoid or narrower, not sharply pointed, 1.5-2.5 mm long.

Fruits: Capsules 5-10 x 3-5 mm, the apex free from the hypanthium. Seeds less than 1 mm long, roughened, with a prominent square base at one end. Flowers June to August, with most fruiting in July.

Identification Tips: *L. dortmannia* flowers are self-pollinated. Underwater flowers do not produce a corolla, remain closed, and their fruits open first. *L. kalmii* has flat, linear to spatula-shaped leaves, pedicels generally with 2 bractlets near the middle, and seeds that are pointed at both ends. Additionally, though the basal leaves generally remain submerged, the stem, stem leaves, and flowers of *L. kalmii* are emergent.

Range: Intermittently circumboreal: northwestern Europe, AK, much of Canada, south to northern OR, MN, WI, MI, PA, and MD.

Habitat/Ecology: Generally in shallow water at the margins of lakes and ponds, but it can grow at depths of 8-10 feet. Associated species include western quillwort (*Isoetes occidentalis*) and pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*). Elevations in WA: 1-300 m (5-1000 ft). This evergreen retains a living, reduced stem for at least 3 consecutive growing seasons. Individuals grow year round. However, those in the shallowest portion of a population's habitat may not overwinter as well. *L. dortmannia* is an indicator of oligotrophic lakes, which possess exceptionally clear and transparent waters.

Comments: Threats include herbicides used to control aquatic weeds, shoreline development, water pollution, and trampling. This species is also rare in AK, OR, Alberta, Sask., Manitoba, PA, NJ, RI, and Prince Edward Island.

References: Szymeja 1987a, 1987b.



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