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## In the Herb Garden

*By Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener*

*The herb section will highlight an herb that can be grown in the South Dakota region.*



**Blue Lobelia AKA Indian tobacco or Pukeweed (*Lobelia inflata*)** is an annual (3-14 inches) or perennial (24-48 inches) in zones 2 to 10. It propagates by seed and division. Blue Lobelia likes full sun to part shade with good drainage in acid to slightly alkaline soil. The pale blue-violet flowers have a narrow oval shape that tapers to a point with 5 lobes of asymmetry and blooms mid-summer up to first frost. The blossoms give way to inflated seed capsules which remain on the stem.

Blue Lobelia has some medicinal qualities. It has been used to promote vomiting.

Native Americans used it for asthma. It contains lobeline which can relax bronchial tubes, open airways and stimulate breathing. Lobeline also has an effect similar to nicotine so people have used it to kick the tobacco habit. Lobeline alters the way stimulants act on the brain's reward center and has been used for treatment of stimulant abuse. Use with the direction of an herbalist.



# Pincushion Flower

*By Roine Klassen, Master Gardener*

(*Scabiosa caucasica*-perennial)

(*Scabiosa atropurpurea*-annual)

The nickname for this flower comes from the stamens that emerge from compact round blooms that look like pins in a pincushion. The plant forms a low mound of foliage of medium green serrated leaves. Healthy plants have from 20-50 blooms; each held individually on thin stems. Flowers are present from spring to fall. Deadheading that many blooms individually is time consuming so shearing of the flower heads may be considered when bloom numbers are down; probably about midsummer. This will encourage more blooms into the fall. When the plant is in bloom it will be about 12 inches tall. Flowers are usually a blue-lavender but may also be found in burgundy, white and pink.

Pincushion flowers prefer full sun with some afternoon sun. Soil that drains well is preferred; water is needed during unusually dry conditions. The plants are started from seeds, either started indoors or sown directly into the soil after the danger of frost is passed. Hardiness zone is 3-7. It was noted to be deer resistant.

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# Exploring with Flowers

*by Eileen Cypher  
Minnehaha County  
Master Gardener  
Volunteer*

First stop: Boyce  
Thompson Arboretum  
Arizona





Second stop: the Black Hills of  
South Dakota





Third stop: Minnehaha County  
South Dakota

