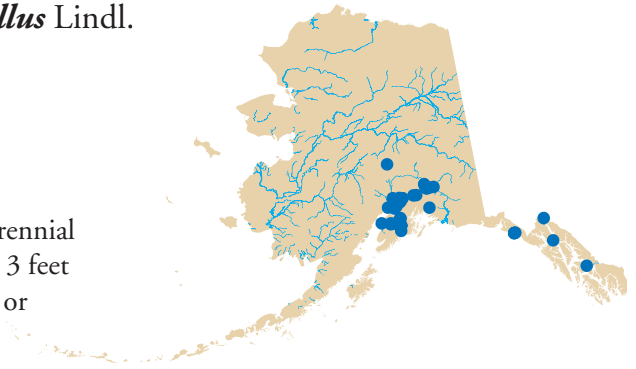
Bigleaf Lupine

Lupinus polyphyllus Lindl.



Alternate Names
Marsh lupine

Description
Bigleaf lupine is a perennial plant that grows 1 to 3 feet high. Stems are erect or ascending, with few to several growing from the woody base of an otherwise herbaceous stem. Leaves have long stalks and 10–18 oblanceolate to elliptic, acute leaflets. Leaflets are 1½–5 inches long and ¼–1 inch broad. Racemes are 2½–10 inches long. Flowers are blue to purple to deep pink to pale and ½–¾ of an inch long. Pods are 1½–2 inches long and distinctly hairy with 6–10 seeds each.

Photo by Markku Saarela

Similar Species
Bigleaf lupine is distinguishable from native Alaskan lupines by the presence of 10 or more leaflets per leaf.

Management
This species can be eradicated when populations are small by digging up rhizomes, but several weedings may be necessary to eliminate plants resprouting from rhizomes and from the seedbank (Densmore et al. 2001).

Notes
Bigleaf lupine is native to the western United States but not to Alaska (Hitchcock and Cronquist 1973, Hultén 1968).

Family: Fabaceae

Bigleaf Lupine

US Geological Survey photo by Chris McKee

Numerous leaflets (>10) distinguish this species from our native lupine species.