

## Baptisia australis 'Lunar Eclipse'

## Lunar Eclipse False Indigo

*Baptisia australis* 'Lunar Eclipse' (Lunar Eclipse False Indigo) is a 4-season, long-lived perennial featuring a robust display of ombre blooms. In early spring, blue-green, asparagus-like wands burst from the soil. In May and June, spikes of lupine like flowers (23" long) tower over a neat mound of three-lobed, blue-green leaves. These flowers change color, blooming white then becoming deeper violet purple with age. This creates a faded, ombre effect with white upper blooms to dark violet blooms at the bottom. These pea-like flowers attract mostly bumblebees which are strong enough to wrestle open the petals. In full bloom, plants are 4-5' tall with a 3-4' spread, creating a vase shape. Plants take on more of a shrubby appearance and tend to open up after bloom. Flowers give way to inflated seed pods which turn charcoal black when ripe and have considerable ornamental interest into winter. Stems with seed pods are valued additions to dried flower arrangements. If left standing, the seeds can be heard rattling in the pods in winter winds. Place this easy-to-care-for plant in full sun to light shade, and dry to moist soils. Like many *Baptisia*, it will tolerate drought, heat, deer and salt, making it a great plant for sunny, urban landscapes.

**Botanical Name:** *Baptisia australis* 'Lunar Eclipse'

**Common Name:** Lunar Eclipse False Indigo

**Family:** Fabaceae

**Nativity:** Great Lakes Native

**USDA Zone:** 3 to 9

**Light Type:** Full sun to light shade

**Soil Type:** Clay, Loam, Sand

**Soil Preferences:** Well-drained; prefers sandy, poor soils

**Soil Moisture:** Dry to moist

**Typical height (ft):** 4-5'

**Typical width (ft):** 3-4'

**Foliage:** Blue green

**Bloom Time:** May, June

**Bloom:** Ombre fade from white to deep violet-blue

**Ecological features:** Bumblebees are primary pollinators but supports other pollinators as well; erosion control; nitrogen-fixing; songbirds eat the seeds in fall and winter

**Tolerance of:** Drought, deer, salt, heat

**Additional notes:** Nitrogen-fixer; has deep taproot & spreads by rhizomes: plants develop slowly expanding clumps with deep and extensive root systems, and should not be disturbed once established

**Companion plants:** Bluestar (*Amsonia* spp.), Coneflowers (*Echinacea* spp.), Coreopsis spp., Russian Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), and ornamental grasses

**For more information see:**

<https://www.americanmeadows.com/perennials/baptisia/baptisia-lunar-eclipse>

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=b660>

<https://wimastergardener.org/article/blue-false-indigo-baptisia-australis/>

<https://mtcubacenter.org/trials/baptisia/baptisia-lunar-eclipse/>

**Images of *Baptisia australis* 'Lunar Eclipse'**



<https://www.perennials.com/plants/baptisia-lunar-eclipse-prairieblues.html>

Flower form



<https://mtcubacenter.org/trials/baptisia/baptisia-lunar-eclipse/>

Plant form



<https://thebelmontrooster.com/families-of-familiar-plants/fabaceae-leguminosae-family/baptisia-australis-blue-false-indigo-blue-wild-indigo/>

Early Spring Emergence



<https://garden.org/plants/photo/296191/>

Dried seed pods in winter

**Image choices for narrative:**

<https://www.perennials.com/plants/baptisia-lunar-eclipse-prairieblues.html> --- Flower form

