"Favorite Flowers of the Chesapeake Master Gardenrs"
Carolina Lupine by Kathy King

Thermopsis villosa
Common name: Carolina lupine or False lupine
Family: Fabaceae

This beautiful perennial is a native to the mountains of the Carolinas and Georgia. In its native setting it can be found in dry open woods and along roadsides. As a native plant it also has wildlife value as a host for butterfly larvae.

It holds a place of honor in our front garden right next to the street. It looks so regal with its erect, dense spikes of creamy yellow lupine like flowers. The leaves are trifoliate in shades of grayish-green.

The Carolina lupines grow in a clump that makes it easier to stake when they get tall. Cutting back the stems a month after flowering supports more dense growth. In spots with poor air circulation it may suffer with some fungal diseases, but otherwise it is a pest free plant. They have tap roots, so it is difficult to transplant them. It is better if they are planted from seeds; the seedlings are easily transplanted. It starts blooming in May and continues into June. I just had to have it when I first saw it because it looks so much like the Texas bluebonnets (*Lupinus texensis*) we admired along the highways in Texas.

Grows in Full sun
Height 3 to 5 feet
Dry to medium soil
Zones 4 to 9

Photo by Kathy King
Reference: Missouri Botanical Garden /Plant Finder
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/thermopsis-villosa/

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