

Weekly Plant Photo Edition

8 April 2019

Common Names: tall mountain larkspur, barestem larkspur
Scientific name: *Delphinium scaposum*

TAV location: on Galileo, stand with your back to the mailboxes for lots 173-176. Across the street is a saguaro on a low ridge. Follow the ridgeline to the right. Past the first shrub and just before the second you'll find the larkspur.



I usually see the common name of tall mountain larkspur for this plant, but I prefer the name barestem larkspur because it actually describes the plant. This native perennial has leaves only at its base. The flower stalk has few if any leaves. This type of flower stalk is called a scape and is also referenced in the scientific name (*scaposum*).

Delphiniums are in the same plant family as columbine. Both of these plants have an unusual flower structure called a spur (see yellow arrow in photo to left). You'll often find the nectary inside the spur (the nectary produces the nectar that attracts pollinators). Barestem larkspur flowers have 5 blue sepals, the upper one forming the spur. There are 4 petals, two white upper petals and 2 blue lateral petals.

