

Delphinium patens Benth. subsp. *hepaticoideum* Ewan, SPREADING LARKSPUR, ZIGZAG LARKSPUR. Perennial herb, clump-forming, fibrous-rooted from vertical rootstock, rosetted, with spreading to erect flowering shoots, 25–80 cm tall; shoots with mostly basal leaves, each with several leaves on lower 1/3; rootstock to 35 × 5 mm. **Stems:** cylindric, to 4 mm diameter, glabrous. **Leaves:** helically alternate, palmately 3-lobed or 5-lobed, long-petiolate, without stipules; petiole cylindric but partially sheathing, flaring and crescent-shaped in ×-section approaching base, to 190 mm long, >> blade, puberulent to sparsely pilose on upper side and margins of flaring base; blade of basal leaves ± kidney-shaped, 10–75 × 20–85 mm, length < width, cordate to truncate at base, lobes typically divided midway to 2/3 distance to base, obovate or somewhat compressed, typically 12–35 mm wide, the central lobe with 2 notches and 3 rounded sublobes having short points, the lateral lobes wider than central lobe with only 1 notch and 2 sublobes, palmately veined with principal veins slightly sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, thin-spongy, paler at sinuses; blade of cauline leaves reduced with narrower, lanceolate lobes. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal and axillary to cauline leaves, 200–600 mm long, several–15-flowered, flowers widely spaced, remaining open for days, bracteate; axis glabrous; bractlet subtending pedicel typically appressed to pedicel, acuminate-linear, 3–6 mm long increasing 2× during flowering, often purple, knobbed at base, short-puberulent with arching hairs; pedicel cylindric, at anthesis 17–40 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, glabrous, with 2 subopposite to alternate bracteoles above midpoint, bracteole narrowly lanceolate, at anthesis 2–4 mm long increasing 2× during flowering, purple or purplish, knobbed at base, puberulent. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, 20–32 mm across, spurred; **sepals** 5, petal-like, dimorphic, dark violet-blue with white markings, the dark parts with rough, short-papillate surfaces producing reflectance, glabrous; lateral and lower sepals spreading to reflexed, obovate, 11–17 × 6–8 mm; upper sepal with limb + spur, limb 9–10 × 5–6 mm, spur sepal bent and spurred backward, ± 9 mm long and wrinkled; **petals** 4, dimorphic, externally with glandular hairs; lateral 2 petals clawed, the claw ca. 5 mm long and having a small greenish pocket at base, whitish above pocket grading to violet, limb spreading or bent downward, oblong, ca. 6 × 4 mm, 2-lobed, dark violet-blue, the lobes of limb ± 4 mm long, with a villous beard on inner surface at fork; upper 2 petals spurred, limb 2-lobed, the lobes acute, 1–1.5 mm long, spur enclosed within and almost as long as sepal spur, ± 9 mm long, bent < 90° at midpoint, above bend trowel-shaped and notched, light violet-blue with white margins, greenish at bend, dark violet on top and at base, whitish along lower length, **nectaries** at base; **stamens** 20–25, helically alternate, free; filaments ± 6 mm long, lavender-white, flattened below midpoint, strongly bent to lower side of flower; anthers basifixed, dithecal, ± 1 mm long, green to greenish yellow or tinged violet, sparsely puberulent, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white, sticky; **pistils** 3, at anthesis 4–4.5 mm long; ovaries superior, free to base, ± candle-shaped, green and somewhat glossy, glabrous or with patches of colorless hairs having fine glandular tips; styles ascending and bent or curving from base, 1.5 mm long, whitish at base grading to lavender and deep purple at tip; stigmas short 2-lobed. **Fruits:** follicles, 3, dehiscent from top downward on inward side, each to 30-seeded, erect, caterpillar-shaped with persistent terminal beak, fruit body 12–14.5 × ± 4 mm, golden tan, having slight bulges of seeds, with lengthwise ridge and raised veins radiating from beak; beak 2.5–3 mm long, blackish.

Seed: irregularly pyramidal, ca. 1.5×1 mm, dark brown, rough, narrowly winged along ridges. Mid-January–late April.

Native. Perennial herb growing mostly on grassy, often rocky slopes with other native herbs in chaparral throughout the range. *Delphinium patens* subsp. *hepaticoideum* is the only local species with rounded lobes on basal leaves, and it generally finishes flowering before *D. parryi* starts to flower in the same habitat. A plant has one or two inflorescences, and a flower opens every couple days but then stays open for a week as the anthers gradually discharge their sticky pollen. The pollinator, attracted to the nectar concealed in petal spurs, moves from one individual to a neighboring plant and thereby can affect cross pollination.

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