

DELPHINIUM PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Larkspur
- Scientific name: *Delphinium spp.*
- Native to areas throughout the Northern Hemisphere
- Ranges in height from 1–7'
- Large flower spikes bloom from late spring to late summer
- Flowers can be purple, blue, red, yellow, or white
- Technically a perennial, though plants often live only 2–3 years
- Hardy to zone 2 (native to Siberia)

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows well in full sun or partial shade
- Grows best in media enriched with plenty of organic matter
- Media should be well-drained and slightly alkaline
- Water once or twice a week during dry periods
- Add general purpose fertilizer once a month until the end of the blooming period
- Mulch for protection in winter

PROPAGATION

- Plant seeds directly into the garden

after danger of frost has passed

- Cover seeds lightly with 1/8" of soil
- Plant seeds 4" apart and thin seedlings to 10–12"
- Germination occurs in 8–15 days; plants will bloom the following year
- Can also be propagated by separating rhizomes of established plants

DISORDERS

- Stem rot (*Sclerotium rolfsii*)
 - Leaves yellow and plant wilts
 - Provide better drainage
 - Remove infected plants
- Powdery mildew (*Erysiphe polygoni*)
 - White coating on leaves
 - Foliage will wilt, brown, and drop
 - Reduce humidity and remove infected foliage
- Bacterial leaf spot (*Pseudomonas*)
 - Irregular black spots appear on leaves
 - Remove infected foliage
- Botrytis gray mold
 - Can blight flowers, stems, and leaves
 - Reduce periods of leaf wetness
- Aster yellows
 - Flowers are converted to green leafy structures

- Destroy infected plants
- Impatiens necrotic spot virus
 - Dark purple spots appear on leaves
 - Remove and destroy plants showing symptoms

CONSUMER CARE

- Requires staking; begin with 4' stakes when the plant reaches 1' in height
- For flower arrangements, cut blooms just before they reach their peak
- Flower spikes should be removed after blooming
- When foliage turns yellow in autumn, cut off remaining stalks at the crown

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Delphinium grandiflorum*
 - 'Blue Mirror': small, deep blue flowers
 - 'Magic Fountain—Cherry Blossom'
 - 'Magic Fountain—Dark Blue with White Bee'
 - 'Magic Fountain—White'
- *Delphinium nudicaule*
 - 'Laurin': bright red flowers

- 'Pacific Giant—Black Knight': deep violet flowers
- 'Pacific Giant—Blue Bird': clear blue flowers
- 'Summer Nights': deep blue flowers

References

<http://gardenersnet.com/flower/larkspur.htm>
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delphinium>
<http://www.backyardgardener.com/delp/black.html>
<http://www.yardener.com/Delphinium.html>

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