

38. *AQUILEGIA VULGARIS* L. (RANUNCULACEAE) — Columbine

Attractive wildflower, more often met in cultivation today, with hay-scented flowers.

The leaf is used in folk remedies for stomach cancer, the seed for cancers of the breast or nose, and the plant for cold impostumes of the uterus.⁴ Reported to be astringent, cyanogenetic, diaphoretic, diuretic, emmenagogue, narcotic, resolvent, and sudorific, columbine is a folk remedy for cancer, dysmenorrhea, hysteria, scurvy, and somnolency.³² Spaniards ate the root, then fasted several days, to correct stones. Seed were taken with saffron in wine for hepatitis and jaundice. Leaves have been applied in sore throat and stomatitis.² Herbage used in homeopathy for female problems (Globus hystericus, climacteric nausea), insomnia, tremors, photosensitivity, audiosensitivity, and dysmenorrhea in young maidens. Seeds are used for buccal sores, dim vision, dysmenorrhea, eczema, fistulas, and jaundice.³³

Herb contains delphinidin-3,5-diglucoside, traces of HCN. Seeds contain lipase, nitrilglycoside; seed oil contains the following acids: capronic-, caprylic-, capric-, lauric-, myristic-, palmitic- (ca. 8%), palmitolic-, stearic-(ca. 1.9%), oleic-(ca. 6%), linoleic-(ca. 24%) and *trans*-5,*cis*-9,*cis*-12,octadecatrienic (ca. 60%).³³

Toxicity — Children have “been poisoned by it when given in too large doses”.² Plant said to be irritant.⁶ Lewis and Elvin-Lewis report fatalities.¹¹