

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Consolida ambigua* – ROCKET LARKSPUR, GARDEN DELPHINIUM [Ranunculaceae]

*Consolida ambigua* (L.) Ball & Heyw., ROCKET LARKSPUR, GARDEN DELPHINIUM. Annual, taprooted, 1-stemmed at base, briefly rosetted, in range typically unbranched and mostly < 25 cm tall; shoots with palmately 3-lobed basal leaves and finely dissected cauline leaves, basal leaves withered at flowering, short-hirsute. **Stems:** ± cylindrical to weakly ridged, to 1.5 mm diameter, tough, internodes < 20 mm long, having short, downward-arching hairs. **Leaves:** helically alternate, finely dissected with linear lobes and sublobes, having to 27 lobes and sublobes, petiolate (basal leaves) and short-petiolate (cauline leaves), without stipules; petiole of lower leaf > internodes, of middle cauline leaves < internodes; blade having to 21 linear to threadlike lobes, lobes < 6–15 × 0.5– < 1 mm, terminal lobe acute-triangular. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal, many-flowered, flowers helically alternate, bracteate; bractlet subtending pedicel, the lowest generally 3-lobed with 5–6 linear sublobes, 4–10 × 0.3–0.4 mm, of other flowers unlobed and linear, to 7 mm long, ≤ pedicel, with blunt, purplish tip; pedicel cylindrical, to 16 mm long, green, glandular-hairy, with 2 bracteoles at top of pedicel, the closest 5 mm from flower, bracteoles subopposite to alternate, 2.2–3 mm long, green sometimes purplish at tip. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, ca. 25 mm across; spurred: **sepals** 5, polymorphic, 4 sepals clawed + upward-pointing spur, the claws 2–3 mm long; lateral sepals 2, limb elliptic to oblanceolate and cupped, ca. 11–12 × 2.8–3 mm, violet-blue, entire and somewhat wavy on margins, prow-shaped to blunt acute at tip, the claw ca. 0.5 mm wide, green with violet margins or green at base, limb 3-veined at base, upper surface glutinous, outer (lower) surface short-hairy; lower sepals 2, ovate, similar to lateral sepals but with wider limb; upper sepal with spur curved sharply upward, in range (wild) to 13.5 mm long and 2.5 mm across at orifice but to 23 mm long and 3 mm across at orifice (cultivated), gradually tapered to blunt tip, appearing green on lower side but membranous and colorless (green = petal spur) and violet-blue on upper side; **corolla** of 2 fused petals on upper side of flower, visible, upper portion 3-lobed, lateral lobes semicircular to earlike, 5–6 × 6 mm, pale to light violet-blue, having a patch of glandular hairs adjacent to base of central lobe, elevated central lobe deeply cleft, 4–6 mm long with sinus to 3 mm, the sublobes ca. 3 mm wide, with thick violet-blue pattern next to white at base and throat; spur backward-pointing portion forming a spur tightly fit within sepal spur, bright green on lower side and pale violet on upper side; inner surface of green spur **nectary** producing nectar; **stamens** 11–16, helically alternate on elevated receptacle (torus), lacking staminodes; filaments flattened but tapered to tip, 4–4.5 × 0.4–0.8 mm, white and flared at base 1.7–2.3 × 0.7–1.1 mm, above midpoint linear, flattened, and light violet, with several short hairs at midpoint; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 1–1.2 mm long, bright greenish yellow to light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow to pale yellowish; **pistil** 1, 3.5–4 mm long; ovary superior, narrowly ovoid, ± 2.8 × 1.3 mm, green, densely puberulent with 2 types of short hairs, the dominant hairs with or without ampulelike bases, 1-chambered with ca. 20 ovules; style stout, 0.5–1 mm long, white to pale violet, with nonglandular hairs; stigma petal-like of 2 flaps, 0.6 mm long, pale violet. **Fruit:** follicle, sessile, dehiscent from top downward to midpoint on 1 side, to 10-seeded, sausage-shaped somewhat inflated, with a straight, terminal style

(beak), in range fruit body ca.  $12.5\text{--}13 \times 4.5$  mm, short-hairy. **Seed:**  $\pm$  D-shaped 3-sided,  $2\text{--}2.8 \times 1.5\text{--}2$  mm, light brown, with an elaborate set of wavy, elevated ridges.  
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