

The Enemy: Tall Larkspur or Dunccecap larkspur (*Delphinium occidentale*)

Strategy: This beautiful native plant is a perennial with a tuberous root system. The leaves are multi-lobed into 3 to 5 divisions that are lobed again. The purple flowers occur at the end of the stalk, which are arranged on opposite sides. The blue to purple flowers have a distinct spur pointing upwards in which it gets its name. The plant can grow to a height of 5 feet, but normally it grows to a height of 3 feet. A distinct characteristic of this plant is that it has a hollow stem. This plant can be found the moist higher elevations all over our region. I saw some of these beautiful flowers over at Mormon Basin recently.

Attack: Watch it this one kills!!! Tall larkspur can get invasive when the livestock, mainly cattle, select against it, which leaves it to dominate the site. All parts of the plant can kill livestock, mainly cattle but also sheep and horses. Particularly watch the higher elevations as this plant grows larger there later in the spring and summer.

The Defense: Keeping livestock off this plant by not feeding the areas until other desirable vegetation is available. Mechanical control (shovel) can be utilized. The best herbicide available is Telar XP (Bayer) at one 1.0 oz per acre and utilizing a silicone based surfactant. The nice aspect of this pesticide is that many woody desirable plants are not affected, therefore, species diversity is retained as well as the much needed trees. Also, it will manage other weeds such as Houndstongue and Scotch/Bull thistle. Other herbicides like Opensight are effective but take out everything but the grasses, which is not a healthy ecosystem. Bear in mind that applying herbicides may make the plant more desirable so don't feed too quick after application. Contact us should you have any questions about his native plant.