

# Colorado Columbine

## *Aquilegia caerulea*



**Columbine can often be found along the forest edges near the rim at Cedar Breaks. This species occurs throughout the Rocky Mountains (it's the state flower of Colorado) where flowers are typically blue and white, hence the name, *caerulea*, from Latin for blue. Many of the plants at Cedar Breaks, however, have flowers that are completely white. The petals of the Columbine flowers have long spurs that contain nectar as a reward for pollinators such as bumblebees and hummingbirds that transfer pollen from one plant to another. Some insects that don't have tongues long enough to reach the nectar, however, will steal it by biting a hole at the back of the spur and get the reward without doing the work of fertilization.**