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Aquilegia canadensis

[Synonyms : *Aquilegia australis*, *Aquilegia canadensis* var. *australis*, *Aquilegia canadensis* var. *coccinea*, *Aquilegia canadensis* var. *eminens*, *Aquilegia canadensis* var. *hybrida*, *Aquilegia canadensis* var. *latiuscula*, *Aquilegia coccinea*, *Aquilegia elegantula*, *Aquilegia latiuscula*, *Aquilegia phoenicantha*]

CANADIAN COLUMBINE is a perennial. Native to eastern North America it has red-spurred, yellow inside, scarlet (rarely white or yellow) flowers with many yellow stamens.

It is also known as Akaley, American columbine, Bells, Cluckies, Columbine, Columbine crowfoot, Common American columbine, Culverwort, Eastern columbine, Eastern wild columbine, Honey horns, Honeysuckle, *Inubtho-kithe-sabe-hi* (Omaha and Ponca North American Indian), Jacket-and-breeches, Jack-in-trousers, *Kanadanakileija* (Finnish), Lady's slipper, Meeting houses, Red bells, Red columbine, Rock bells, Rock lily, *Scharlakansakleja* (Swedish), *Skalikatit* (Pawnee North American Indian), Turk's cap, and Wild columbine.

The flowers are pollinated by hummingbirds.

Warning – the whole plant is allegedly poisonous.

Canadensis means 'of or from Canada or north-eastern North America'.

Following his trip to Virginia in 1637 John Tradescant the Younger (1608-1662) brought specimens of Canadian columbine back to Britain.

The perfume of the crushed seeds (often chewed to crush them) was popular in the Omaha and Ponca North American Indian tribes particularly among the young unmarried men. In addition both tribes and the Meskwaki and Pawnee too believed the seeds (in powder or paste form) to be a love charm. The Meskwaki included the seeds in tobacco mixtures and used them in ceremonial rituals. While for the Cherokee Canadian columbine was a tool that could detect bewitchment.

Medicinally, the crushed seeds were used by some North American tribes including the Cherokee to treat some heart disorders, and the Omaha, Pawnee and Ponca turned to it for treating fevers and headaches. The Iroquois tribe included it as an ingredient in a potion to ease the symptoms of poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), the Chippewa Indians valued the plant for easing some stomach upsets, and the Meskwaki relied on it for treating diarrhoea.