

AgBud



A series of horticulture insights

Did you know?

The genus name, *Asclepias*, commemorates Asklepios, the Greek god of medicine.

Overview

- Over 450 insects are known to feed on some portion of the plant.
- In the northeast and midwest, it is among the most important food plants for monarch caterpillars.
- Milkweed contain various levels of cardiac glycoside compounds which render the plants toxic to most insects and animals.
- The name "milkweed" refers to the milky latex contained within the leaves.

Production

Milkweed grows to about 5 feet tall, usually occurring in clusters of stout stems.

It is tolerant of light shade, but generally is a full sun species.

Milkweed has a unique and fascinating pollination mechanism in which the plant relies on Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and Hymenoptera (bees, ants, and wasps) for pollination.

Milkweed

Kingdom: *Plantae*

Class: *Magnoliopsida*

Order: *Gentianales*

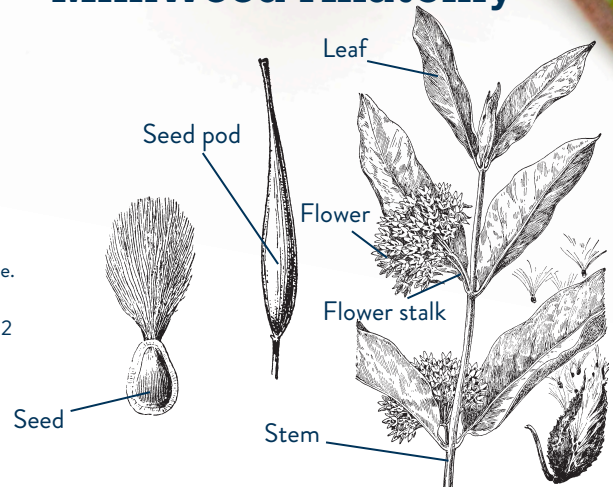
Family: *Asclepiadaceae*

Genus: *Asclepias*

History

- Early European settlers called milkweed "pleurisy root" and used an infusion to relieve lung inflammation.
- The U.S. government listed the root of butterfly milkweed as an official herbal remedy from 1820 to 1936.

Milkweed Anatomy



Sources: <https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/classification/43599>
[https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/asclepias_syriaca.shtml#:~:text=It%20is%20tolerant%20of%20light,2%2D3.6%20inches\)%20wide.](https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/asclepias_syriaca.shtml#:~:text=It%20is%20tolerant%20of%20light,2%2D3.6%20inches)%20wide.)
<https://www.monarchwatch.org/milkweed/>
<https://extension.umaine.edu/signs-of-the-seasons/news-events/the-story-of-milkweed/#:~:text=Early%20European%20settlers%20called%20milkweed,young%20green%20fruits%20of%20milkweed.>

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