

MILKWEED



Photo: Patrick Alexander, Peganum

SWAMP MILKWEED

Asclepias incarnata

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

Downy (hairy), from 60 to 200 cm tall.

FLOWERS

Umbels: red or purplish-pink.

LEAVES

Narrow, tapered, 4 to 17 cm long, arranged in opposite pairs.

FRUIT

Long, narrow and smooth follicles, changing colour from green to brownish.

HABITAT

Wetlands. Also found in swamps, ditches and near streams, rivers and lakes.

POPULATIONS

Often scattered – does not form dense colonies.

LOCATIONS

Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec

MILKWEED



Photo: Justin Meisen,
Brett Whaley

DWARF MILKWEED

Asclepias ovalifolia

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

Simple (unbranched) and downy, 30 to 60 cm tall.

FLOWERS

Greenish white or pale mauve corolla; orange or yellow corona.

LEAVES

Opposite, oval, with pointy tips, 5 to 8 cm long.

HABITAT

Likes sandy soil, roadsides and dry, sunny conditions.

LOCATION

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario

MILKWEED



Photo: Matt Lavin,
Andrey Zarkikh

SHOWY MILKWEED

Asclepias speciosa

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

45 to 200 cm tall, velvety or pubescent (hairy).

FLOWERS

Pale pink, arranged in umbels. The corona hoods are long (9 to 13 mm) and lance-shaped, making the flowers look like stars.

LEAVES

Opposite, 10 to 25 cm long, smooth or slightly downy.

HABITAT

Well-drained soil, sunny sites, pastures, forest edges, untilled fields, roadsides, ditches.

LOCATION

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba

MILKWEED



Photo: Daphné Laurier Montpetit

COMMON MILKWEED

Asclepias syriaca

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

Downy, usually single, 90 to 120 cm tall.
Underground stems.

FLOWERS

Pale pink or mauve, arranged in almost
spherical umbels.

LEAVES

Broad and thick, 10 to 20 cm long, arranged in
opposite pairs on the stem and with pubescent
undersides.

FRUIT

Large spindle-shaped fruit, bumpy, rough and
downy.

HABITAT

Poor, dry soil, disturbed, sunny sites.

LOCATION

Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec,
New Brunswick, Nova-Scotia, Prince Edward
Island

MILKWEED



Photo: Aaron Carlson

WHORLED MILKWEED

Asclepias verticillata

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

Angled, pubescent (hairy) or glabrous, 40 to 100 cm tall.

FLOWERS

White corona and greenish corolla.

LEAVES

Elongated and narrow, almost threadlike, 5 to 10 cm long. Arranged in groups of 2 to 4, opposite each other on the stem.

FRUIT

Elongated and lance-shaped, 7 to 10 cm long, glabrous or pubescent (hairy).

HABITAT

Dry, infertile soils.

LOCATION

Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario

MILKWEED



Photo: No name, Matta Lavin

GREEN MILKWEED

Asclepias viridiflora

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

30 to 90 cm tall, pubescent, green and sometimes purplish.

FLOWERS

Arranged in often downward-facing umbels, pale green sometimes tinged with violet. Unlike other milkweed species, the flowers of this species have no corona hoods.

LEAVES

Arranged in opposite pairs on the stem. Vary in shape depending on the habitat where the plant is found. They may be long and narrow or broader and oval. The leaf edges may sometimes be wavy.

HABITAT

Dry, sandy or rocky soils, but also in wetter sites like marshes.

LOCATION

British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario

MILKWEED



Photo: Brett Whaley,
Frank Mayfield

BUTTERFLY MILKWEED

Asclepias tuberosa

SPECIFICATIONS

STEM

20 to 60 cm tall.

FLOWERS

Bright orange-yellow, arranged in umbels.

LEAVES

Alternate on the stem (not opposite each other), lance-shaped, 5 to 10 cm long, smooth on top and downy beneath.

HABITAT

Limestone soils, open, rocky, dry sites.
Does not tolerate shade.

UNIQUE FEATURE

No milky sap.

LOCATION

Ontario, Quebec