

Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Milkweed Family

Other Common Names: none

Scientific Name: *Asclepias syriaca* L.

Plant Symbol: ASSY

Distinguishing characteristics: Flowers in circular clusters from the leaf axils on the upper portion of the plant, each flower on a long stalk; petals reflexed, lavender or pink but may be greenish or white with pink highlights; leaves are in pairs (opposite) along the stem, lance-shaped to elliptical.

Plant Height: 2–5 ft., usually unbranched

Blooms/Fruits: May–August

Duration: Perennial, herbaceous and colonial (from deep-set rhizomes)

Pollinator Value: Larval host plant for the monarch butterfly. The plant is very attractive to butterflies and bees because it is a high quality nectar source.

Habitat: Roadsides, disturbed areas, field borders, bottomland & upland prairies, pastures, and old fields.

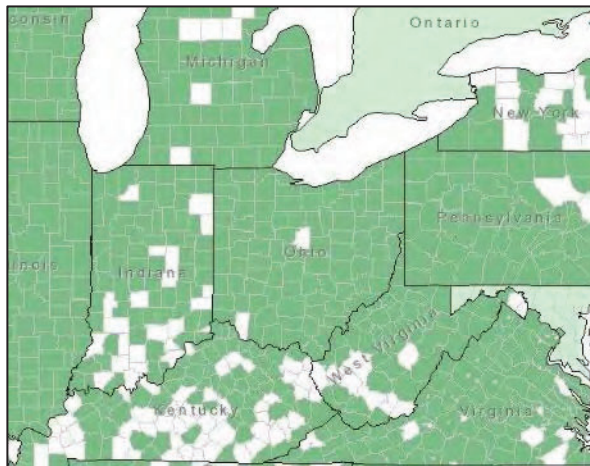




Photo: Kelly Gill, Xerces Society



Photo: Kelly Gill, Xerces Society

Flowering/close-up of flowers



Photo: Mike Haddock



Photo: Kelly Gill, Xerces Society

Stem and leaf arrangement