

Our Native Milkweed: Common Milkweed, (*Asclepias syriaca*)

Photo from Monarch Watch



“Monarchs cannot survive without milkweed. Monarch caterpillars need milkweed plants to grow and develop, and female Monarch butterflies only lay their eggs on milkweed. With shifting land management practices, we have lost much milkweed from the landscape. Plant milkweed to support Monarch populations.”

Monarch Joint Venture

*If you plant native flowers ...
pollinators will come!*

Other pollinators besides Monarchs are also disappearing due to habitat loss. The loss is no small matter. Insects help the web of life with essential services, and they are a prime source of food for birds. Some 80 percent of our food crops are pollinated by insects. “All of them are in trouble.” *Marla Spivak, Professor of Apiculture, University of Minnesota*

Photo by Mary Collier



How to Plant Milkweeds

- ◆ Common Milkweed is a perennial that spreads. It may be a problem in a small garden. Plant it in an area where it can spread.
- ◆ Plant in full sun ... in well-drained soil.
- ◆ Plant about 12 to 18 inches apart.
- ◆ Plant a little on the high side...don't cover the top of the plug...don't bury the leaves.
- ◆ Don't fertilize or spray with pesticides.
- ◆ Water the milkweed regularly during the first summer. Once established native plants typically do not need additional water.
- ◆ Do not mow off plants in the first year. Later if not mowed off more than once, it will grow back.
- ◆ We expect the plugs to be delivered in the proper growing season and should be planted as soon as possible for greatest success. Milkweed can be planted anytime until mid-summer. Milkweed can also be planted in the fall.

Photo by Colleen Wolport



Remember that milkweeds are food for Monarch caterpillars, so chewed leaves are a sign that they are doing their job!