



## Milkweed for Monarchs

- The Monarch butterfly, one of North America's most amazing creatures, relies solely upon Milkweed for its survival. Female Monarch butterflies are drawn to Milkweed, the only type of plant they'll lay their eggs on. The toxins found in Milkweed, when ingested by caterpillars, create a defense mechanism that makes them unpalatable to predators. Unfortunately, many farmers and landowners see Milkweed as an unwelcome pest due to these same toxins that may endanger their animals if eaten. For many gardeners, Milkweed is nothing more than an unwanted guest in their flower beds that must be weeded out. Due to this prevalent negative perspective on Milkweed, and the habitat loss that Milkweed continues to face, the Monarch butterfly has suffered a critical decline in population since 2004 -2005. To stop, and even begin to reverse this trend, more Milkweed must be added to our gardens and landscapes. Many others have already started to do their part by planting more **Milkweed for Monarchs**, but much more is needed. You can join the movement and help to save the Monarchs by planting Milkweed! Parsons' Gardens has several types of Milkweed to choose from and we'd love to help you select the varieties that will perfectly fit into your outdoor space! - Jay Parsons

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# Native Milkweeds

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## Butterfly Milkweed - *Asclepias tuberosa*

- Height: 2 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Taproot
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Orange
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Common Milkweed - *Asclepias syrica*

- Height: 3-4 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Light Pink
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Narrow-leaved Milkweed - *Asclepias stenophylla*

- Height: 1-2 feet - Width: 1 foot
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Tuberos Roots
- Flowers: July & August - Color: Greenish White
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Poke Milkweed - *Asclepias exaltata*

- Height: 3-5 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Pinkish White
- Native: Iowa & Minnesota
- Sun: Partial Sun to Shade
- Soil: Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Prairie Milkweed - *Asclepias sullivantii*

- Height: 3-4 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Lavender & White
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Medium to Wet
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Purple Milkweed - *Asclepias purpurascens*

- Height: 3-4 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Pinkish Purple
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly





## Short Green Milkweed - *Asclepias viridiflora*

- Height: 1-2 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Taproot
- Flowers: July & August - Color: Green
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Showy Milkweed - *Asclepias speciosa*

- Height: 4 feet - Width: 2-3 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: June & July - Color: Pink
- Native: Western Kansas
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Spider Milkweed - *Asclepias viridis*

- Height: 1-2 feet - Width: 2-3 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: May & June - Color: Creamy White & Purple
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Swamp Milkweed - *Asclepias incarnata*

- Height: 3-4 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Fibrous Roots
- Flowers: July & August - Color: Pink
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Medium to Wet
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Tall Green Milkweed - *Asclepias hirtella*

- Height: 3-4 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Tap Root
- Flowers: June & July - Color: White
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



## Whorled Milkweed - *Asclepias verticillata*

- Height: 1-2 feet - Width: 1 foot
- Growth: Upright Wildflower - Rhizomatic Roots
- Flowers: July & August - Color: White
- Native: Kansas & Missouri
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly





# Non-Native Milkweeds

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## Tropical Milkweed - *Asclepias curassavica*

- Height: 2-3 feet - Width: 1-2 feet
- Growth: Upright Annual Flower - Frost Tender
- Flowers: Summer - Color: Red & Orange
- Native: South America \* Non-Native Milkweed
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium to Wet
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



\* To protect Monarchs, allow plants to die off in the winter, not bringing plants indoors to survive.  
Replant new plants the next growing season, like you would with other annual flowers.



## Balloon Milkweed - *Gomphocarpus physocarpus*

- Height: 5-6 feet - Width: 2-3 feet
- Growth: Upright Annual Flower - Frost Tender
- Flowers: Summer - Color: White / Pinkish Purple
- Native: Tropical Africa \* Non-Native Milkweed
- Sun: Full to Partial Sun
- Soil: Dry to Medium to Wet
- Wildlife Benefit: Nectar Source & Larval Host Plant for Monarch Butterfly



\* To protect Monarchs, allow plants to die off in the winter, not bringing plants indoors to survive.  
Replant new plants the next growing season, like you would with other annual flowers.

# Parsons' Gardens

native plants for wildlife



\* The following sources were used when gathering information & pictures for this native plant list:

- [www.hort.extension.wisc.edu](http://www.hort.extension.wisc.edu)
- [www.kansasnativeplants.com](http://www.kansasnativeplants.com)
- [www.mowildflowers.net](http://www.mowildflowers.net)
- [www.nature.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.nature.mdc.mo.gov)
- [www.plants.usda.gov](http://www.plants.usda.gov)
- [www.prairiemoon.com](http://www.prairiemoon.com)
- [www.prairienursery.com](http://www.prairienursery.com)
- [www.reneesgarden.com](http://www.reneesgarden.com)

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