

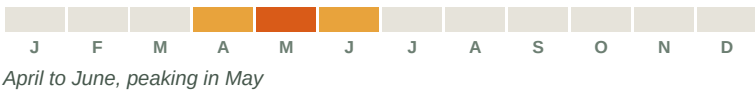
NATIVE, RARE OR PROTECTED MONARCH VALUE ●●●●●

Cutler's Milkweed

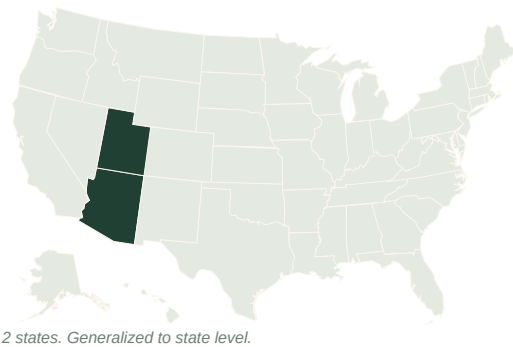
Asclepias cutleri Woodson

A sand dune specialist of the Four Corners, and one of the smallest milkweeds in North America at barely a hand's width tall. Purple flowers with off-white hoods on thread-fine leaves, growing in loose sand that moves underfoot.

IN FLOWER



RECORDED RANGE



KEY FACTS

HEIGHT	4in-8in	SPREAD	6in-1ft
FLOWERS	purple, pink, white	BLOOM	April to June
LIGHT	Full sun	SOIL	Dry
USDA ZONES	5 to 8	LEAVES	alternate, threadlike
SAP	Milky latex	ROOTS	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
SEED	30 days cold-moist	RATINGS	Garden 1/5, nectar 2/5, monarch 2/5

HOW TO IDENTIFY IT

- Very small: a perennial herb only 10 to 20 cm high, with ascending stems sparingly branched near the base.
- Thread-fine leaves, narrowly linear, 1 to 8 cm long and just 1 to 3 mm wide, set irregularly alternate along the stem.
- Purple to pinkish petals with off-white hoods, flowering early, from April to June.
- Weakly stabilized sand and gravelly ground between about 4,300 and 5,200 feet. Nothing else this small grows in that habitat.

ECOLOGY AND WILDLIFE VALUE

A narrow endemic of the Colorado Plateau, much of its range on Navajo Nation land. Its value to monarchs is modest simply because there is so little of it, but shifting sand habitat is scarce and losing it loses the species.

GROWING IT

Not cultivated and not available. It is here to be identified and reported, not grown. Sand dune endemics are easily destroyed by vehicle traffic, and a population can be lost in an afternoon.

CAUTIONS

Standard milkweed cautions. Do not collect: this species exists in a handful of places and nowhere else.

WHERE IT GROWS

Arizona, Utah

REFERENCES

- Plants of the World Online. <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:21177-2>
- GBIF. <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170324>
- iNaturalist. <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/158736>
- BONAP county-level map. <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20cutleri.png>

THE FULL ACCOUNT, WITH MORE PHOTOGRAPHS

<https://milkweedusa.com/species/cutlers-milkweed/>