

Desert Milkweed

Asclepias erosa Torr.

Erose Milkweed

A big, pale, upright milkweed of the Mojave and Sonoran deserts, with chalky white stems, thick cream-edged leaves and heavy clusters of yellowish-white flowers that persist through the hottest months.



Mike. CC BY-SA 3.0. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	2ft-5ft
Flowers	cream, yellow	Bloom	April to September
Light	Full sun	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	8-11	Leaves	opposite, ovate
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	30 days cold-moist	States	4

How to identify it

- Tall stiff stems that look bleached white or very pale green.
- Thick leaves with pale, often crisped or eroded-looking margins.
- Large clusters of cream-yellow flowers, blooming in true desert heat.

Ecology

One of very few milkweeds available to monarchs and queens in the low desert during summer, often along washes and roadsides.

Growing

Excellent in a Southwest desert garden: architectural, heat-proof and long-blooming. Needs full sun and fast drainage.

Cautions

Standard milkweed cautions.

Where it grows

Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah

More photographs



Stan Shebs. CC BY-SA 3.0. Wikimedia Commons.



Stan Shebs. CC BY-SA 3.0. Wikimedia Commons.



Stan Shebs. CC BY-SA 3.0. Wikimedia Commons.

References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94260-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170333>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/57907>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20erosa.png>

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