

Mead's Milkweed

Asclepias meadii Torr. ex A. Gray

A federally threatened tallgrass-prairie milkweed with a single nodding cluster of greenish-cream flowers on a slim glaucous stem. It survives almost entirely on hay meadows and prairie remnants that have never been plowed.



Jay Sturner from USA. CC BY 2.0. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native, rare	Height	1ft-2ft
Flowers	green, cream	Bloom	May to June
Light	Full sun	Soil	Average, Dry
USDA zones	4-7	Leaves	opposite, oblong
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Rhizomatous, spreads by root
Stratification	60 days cold-moist	States	4

How to identify it

- One drooping flower cluster per stem, pale green-cream.
- Smooth blue-green leaves in widely spaced opposite pairs.
- Found only on high-quality unplowed tallgrass prairie.

Ecology

Listed as Threatened under the US Endangered Species Act. Mid-summer haying prevents seed set, and most surviving populations are single clones that cannot self-pollinate.

Growing

Legally protected. Do not collect seed, plants or cuttings. Report sightings to your state heritage program.

Cautions

Federally threatened. Collection is prohibited.

Where it grows

Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri

More photographs



Jay Sturner from USA. CC BY 2.0. Wikimedia Com



Jay Sturner from USA. CC BY 2.0. Wikimedia Com



Jay Sturner from USA. CC BY 2.0. Wikimedia Com

References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94445-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170259>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/158749>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20meadii.png>

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