

Pinewoods Milkweed

Asclepias humistrata Walter

Sandhill Milkweed, Purple Milkweed

One of the most beautiful foliage plants in the genus: sprawling stems of thick blue-gray clasping leaves veined in bright pink, lying flat on white sand under longleaf pine, topped with pale pink-white flowers in spring.



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Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	8in-2ft
Flowers	pink, white	Bloom	March to June
Light	Full sun, Part shade	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	7-10	Leaves	opposite, clasping
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	None needed	States	7

How to identify it

- Leaves waxy blue-gray with vivid pink or magenta veins, and unmistakable for it.
- Stems lie flat along the ground, radiating from a central taproot.
- Grows only in deep dry sand, typically in longleaf pine sandhill.
- Blooms very early, from March.

Ecology

The single most important spring monarch host in the Southeast's sandhill country, and heavily used by the returning migration as it crosses Florida and Georgia.

Growing

Needs pure sand and full sun; impossible in heavy soil. Fresh seed germinates without stratification.

Cautions

Standard milkweed cautions.

Where it grows

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina

More photographs



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References

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- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170319>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/128756>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20humistrata.png>

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