

Wheel Milkweed

Asclepias uncialis Greene

Dwarf Milkweed, Greene's Milkweed

One of the rarest and smallest milkweeds in North America, a two-inch-high scatter of maroon-tinged flowers on the shortgrass steppe, tracked as a species of concern in several states including Colorado.



Steve Olson. Public domain. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native, rare	Height	2in-6in
Flowers	maroon, green	Bloom	April to June
Light	Full sun	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	4-8	Leaves	opposite, narrow
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	60 days cold-moist	States	7

How to identify it

- Minute: frequently no taller than a golf tee, easily overlooked among grass.
- Flowers dull maroon and green, held just above the soil.
- Appears briefly in spring then disappears.

Ecology

Poorly understood. Habitat loss to cultivation and energy development is the principal threat; report sightings to your state natural heritage program.

Growing

Do not attempt to collect. This species should be left entirely alone in the wild.

Cautions

Rare and legally protected in parts of its range. Photograph, record and leave it.

Where it grows

Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming

More photographs



Patrick Alexander from Las Cruces, NM. CC0. Wi



Patrick Alexander from Las Cruces, NM. CC0. Wi



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References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94711-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170289>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/126674>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20uncialis.png>

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