

White Milkweed

Asclepias variegata L.

Redring Milkweed

Tight snowball clusters of pure white flowers, each ringed with a fine purple-red band at its base, glowing in the half-shade of southeastern oak and pine woods. The most striking white-flowered milkweed in North America.



Mason Brock (Masebrock). Public domain. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	1.5ft-3.5ft
Flowers	white	Bloom	May to July
Light	Part shade, Shade	Soil	Dry, Average
USDA zones	5-9	Leaves	opposite, ovate
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	30 days cold-moist	States	25

How to identify it

- Dense, almost spherical clusters of white flowers, unlike the loose heads of poke milkweed.
- A distinct dark red or purple ring where the hoods meet the corolla.
- Broad dark green leaves in well-spaced opposite pairs.
- Woodland and woodland-edge habitat.

Ecology

An important nectar source for woodland butterflies and a modest monarch host in southeastern forests.

Growing

Beautiful and well behaved in a shaded native garden with good drainage. Slow from seed; scarce in the trade.

Cautions

Standard milkweed cautions.

Where it grows

Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia

More photographs



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References

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- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170272>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/127691>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20variegata.png>

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