

Woollypod Milkweed

Asclepias eriocarpa Benth.

Indian Milkweed, Kotolo

A stout, woolly, cream-flowered California milkweed of dry hillsides and roadsides, with thick whorled leaves and densely hairy pods. Historically the most important fiber plant of several California Indigenous nations.



Pacific Southwest Region USFWS from Sacramento, US. Public domain. Wikimedia Commons

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	2ft-4ft
Flowers	cream, white	Bloom	May to August
Light	Full sun	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	7-10	Leaves	whorled, oblong
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Rhizomatous, spreads by root
Stratification	30 days cold-moist	States	2

How to identify it

- Thick, wavy-edged leaves usually in whorls of three or four.
- Dense clusters of cream-white flowers with a waxy look.
- Pods conspicuously covered in white wool.

Ecology

A major western monarch host across California's interior valleys and foothills, and unusually high in cardenolides, which gives its larvae strong chemical defense.

Growing

Drought-tolerant and long-lived, but coarse. Best in wilder parts of a California garden.

Cautions

One of the most toxic North American milkweeds to livestock.

Where it grows

California, Nevada

More photographs



John Rusk from Berkeley, CA, United States of



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References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94258-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170253>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/58796>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20eriocarpa.png>

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