



UTAH POLLINATOR HABITAT PROGRAM

Showy Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)



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Zone: 4-8

Color: White to pink

Bloom Time: June to August

Plant Type: Perennial herb

Mature Height: 1-5' tall

Mature Spread: 1-3' wide

Water Use: Low water

Soil Type: Well-drained clay, loam, and sand. Can grow in course, medium, and fine soils.

Range and Native Habitat: The Showy Milkweed is native to much of the western half of North America. It grows in dry to moist prairies, road-sides, old fields, and meadows.

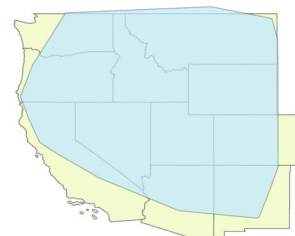
Suggested Maintenance: If a clump becomes too large, excess rootstock can be pruned during the winter when the plant is dormant. To prevent the plant from re-seeding, cut off the pods before they open. Leave hollow stalks during the winter to provide nesting habitat for native bees and other insects. Delay cutting in the spring (or bundle and hang the stems) to allow for emergence of insects. Due to the long taproot, the plant does not transplant well. Seed in the fall or cold-stratify the seeds for spring planting.

Other: The group of milkweeds are the only host plant for the monarch caterpillar. Alkaloids inside the plant are picked up by the caterpillars making them taste bad to predators. The alkaloids also make the plant toxic to livestock. The flowers are highly fragrant and attract a multitude of pollinators, especially bumble bees and swallowtail butterflies. The plant spreads through underground rhizomes.

Wildlife Supported



Distribution Map



Landscaping Information



Sun
Full sun



Water Needs
Low



Summer Irrigation
Max 2x / month once established



Soil Drainage
Fast to medium



Propagation
By seed. Seeds need to be cold-stratified 6-8 weeks.