

# Common milkweed

*Asclepias syriaca*

Minnesota C-Value: not assigned  
Wetland Indicator Status: UPL  
Native



**Leaves:** Opposite, short-stalked, oblong to oval, rigid and leathery quality with downy hairs underneath. Emit milky sap when pulled from stem.

**Stems:** Erect. 3-6 ft tall. Stem is downy. Milky sap present when broken.

**Flowers and fruit:** Small purple-pink hooded flowers 3-4 mm. Many per umbel, which is often drooping from a stem 3-10 cm long. Fruits are large (8-13 cm) pods with soft spines, that open in early autumn. The pod shells tend to persist on dead stems throughout winter.

**Plant communities:** Wet meadows and prairies, woodland edges, disturbed soils.

**Comments:** Perennial native reproducing by seeds and rhizomes. Other milkweed species with similar vegetative features differ in flower structure and color. Swamp milkweed (*A. incarnata*), a wetland obligate, has a less-milky sap, lance-shaped narrow-tipped leaves, and smooth leaves.



Seed pod