

sand milkweed *Asclepias amplexicaulis*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Anthophyta

Class: Dicotyledonae

Order: Gentianales

Family: Asclepiadaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Sand milkweed is also known as blunt-leaved milkweed. This perennial herb has a sprawling growth habit, often growing flat against the substrate. The wavy, gray-green, simple leaves clasp the stem. Leaves are in an opposite arrangement on the stems. Both the stems and the leaf veins are pink to red in coloration. The plant has a milky sap. Flowers are green with purple tints. Typical of milk-weed flowers, they have five petals that are turned downward supporting a “crown” of five inward-turning horns. The long, pointed seedpods are held vertically. They contain winged seeds. Sand milkweed may attain a height of one to three feet.

BEHAVIORS

Sand milkweed is most commonly found in the northern three-fourths of Illinois and may rarely be found in the rest of the state. It grows in dry, sand prairies. Flowers are produced from May through July. Insects are the main pollinating agent, and the wind disperses the seeds.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

none

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; gravel prairie; sand prairie

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