

ASCLEPIAS VARIEGATA L.  
White Milkweed

FAMILY: Asclepiadaceae

HABIT: Erect herbaceous perennial with milky sap, 3-9 dm.; flowering late May-July; fruiting August, September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *A. variegata*, with its compact, waxy, pure white flowers with purple centers, is a distinctive species. In fruit, *A. variegata* is often confused with both *A. purpurascens* and *A. exaltata*, the habitats and ranges of which are similar.

TOTAL RANGE: CT and s. NY to n. FL, nw. to OH, w. and s. to MO and e. TX.

STATE RANGE: Chiefly in the southcentral counties in the unglaciated section of the state. Post-1980 records are known from Gallia, Jackson, Lawrence, Scioto, and Vinton counties. Pre-1980 records are known from Adams, Fairfield, Franklin, Hocking, and Summit counties.

HABITAT: Sandy or rocky soil in moist or dry upland woods, thickets and wooded roadsides.

HAZARDS: Possibly lumbering of woodlands and over-collecting by plant collectors. This is one of Ohio's most attractive milkweeds and is sometimes dug by wildflower enthusiasts.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Probably good due to its tolerance of disturbance and its stout perennial caudex which annually produces herbaceous shoots.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: For accurate identification, flowering stalks should be collected. Fruiting material is difficult to identify. Avoid over-collecting.

COMMENTS: This is an Appalachian species that should be sought in suitable habitats throughout unglaciated southeastern Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Andreas, B.K. and T.S. Cooperrider. 1980. The Asclepiadaceae of Ohio. *Castanea* 45: 51-55.

Woodson, R.E., Jr. 1941. The North American Asclepiadaceae. I. Perspective of the genera. *Ann. Mo. Bot. Gar.* 28: 193-244.

Woodson, R.E., Jr. 1954. The North American species of *Asclepias* L. *Ann. Mo. Bot. Gar.* 41: 1-211.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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