

Bract Milkweed

Asclepias brachystephana Engelm. ex Torr.

Short-crown Milkweed

A low desert grassland milkweed with narrow folded leaves and dense clusters of small dusky purple flowers held tight in the leaf axils, common on caliche flats in New Mexico and west Texas.



Patrick Alexander from Las Cruces, NM. CC0. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	6in-1.5ft
Flowers	maroon, purple	Bloom	April to August
Light	Full sun	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	6-10	Leaves	opposite, narrow
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	30 days cold-moist	States	3

How to identify it

- Small purple-maroon flowers in compact axillary clusters.
- Narrow leaves, often folded along the midrib and grayish.
- Low sprawling habit on hard calcareous desert soils.

Ecology

A widespread Chihuahuan Desert host used by monarchs and queens during migration.

Growing

Rarely cultivated.

Cautions

Standard milkweed cautions.

Where it grows

Arizona, New Mexico, Texas

More photographs



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References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94136-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170258>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/158733>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20brachystephana.png>

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