

Pallid Milkweed

Asclepias cryptoceras S. Watson

Jewelled Milkweed, Humboldt Mountain Milkweed

A jewel of the Great Basin: a low sprawling rosette of round, waxy, blue-green leaves surrounding cream flowers with vivid rose-pink hoods, blooming in spring on barren clay and shale slopes where nothing else grows.



Thayne Tuason. CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons.

Key facts

Field	Value	Field	Value
Status	Native	Height	4in-1ft
Flowers	cream, pink	Bloom	April to June
Light	Full sun	Soil	Dry
USDA zones	4-8	Leaves	opposite, orbicular
Sap	Milky latex	Roots	Deep taproot, resents transplanting
Stratification	60 days cold-moist	States	10

How to identify it

- Prostrate habit: the plant lies flat on the ground in a neat circle.
- Leaves nearly circular, thick, smooth and glaucous blue-green.
- Flowers cream with startlingly pink or purple hoods, unlike any other milkweed.

Ecology

A specialist of harsh desert substrates. Little used by monarchs because it goes dormant by early summer, but botanically one of the most remarkable plants in the genus.

Growing

For experienced rock gardeners only. Needs a mineral, unwatered, perfectly drained site and a long cold stratification.

Cautions

Standard milkweed cautions.

Where it grows

Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

More photographs



Mary Winter. CC0. Wikimedia Commons.



Thayne Tuason. CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons



Thayne Tuason. CC BY-SA 4.0. Wikimedia Commons

References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:94206-1>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170263>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/62297>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20cryptoceras.png>

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