

# Welsh's Milkweed

*Asclepias welshii* N.H. Holmgren & P.K. Holmgren

A federally threatened dune endemic known from only a handful of active sand dune systems on the Utah-Arizona border, including the Coral Pink Sand Dunes. Thick woolly gray leaves and creamy flower clusters on plants that survive by growing up through shifting sand.



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## Key facts

| Field          | Value              | Field  | Value                        |
|----------------|--------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| Status         | Native, rare       | Height | 1.5ft-4ft                    |
| Flowers        | cream, pink        | Bloom  | May to July                  |
| Light          | Full sun           | Soil   | Dry                          |
| USDA zones     | 5-8                | Leaves | opposite, ovate              |
| Sap            | Milky latex        | Roots  | Rhizomatous, spreads by root |
| Stratification | 60 days cold-moist | States | 2                            |

## How to identify it

- Broad, thick, densely white-woolly leaves in well-spaced opposite pairs.
- Creamy-white flowers tinged pink, in dense terminal clusters.
- Grows only in active, shifting sand dunes, so habitat alone identifies it.

## Ecology

A dune specialist whose rhizomes let it re-emerge after burial by moving sand. Off-road vehicle traffic and dune stabilisation by invasive plants are the principal threats.

## Growing

Legally protected. Do not collect seed, plants or cuttings, and do not attempt to cultivate it from wild material.

## Cautions

Listed as Threatened under the US Endangered Species Act. Collection is prohibited.

## Where it grows

Arizona, Utah

## More photographs



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Jared Shorma. CC BY 4.0. iNaturalist.

## References

- Plants of the World Online: <https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:21339-2>
- GBIF: <https://www.gbif.org/species/3170262>
- iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/158765>
- BONAP county map: <https://bonap.net/MapGallery/County/Asclepias%20welshii.png>

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