

# Showy Milkweed

*Asclepias speciosa*

## At a Glance

Height: 2 to 4 feet tall

Bloom Colors: Fragrant pink star-shaped flowers

Bloom Time: Early to mid-summer

Days to Maturity: Perennial, blooms in second year

Best For: Monarch butterfly habitat, native gardens

## Growing Conditions Quick Reference

Soil Temperature: 65-75F for best germination

Soil Type: Well-drained, sandy or loamy soil

Light Requirements: Full sun

Planting Depth: Surface sow or lightly cover

Seeding Rate: Thin to 18-24 inches apart

Moisture Needs: Moderate; drought tolerant once established

Average Germination Time: 14-28 days (requires cold stratification)

## How to Grow

When to Plant: Sow outdoors in fall or cold-stratify seeds for 30-60 days before spring planting.

Location: Full sun with well-drained soil.

Spacing: Thin seedlings to 18-24 inches apart.

Watering: Moderate; low once established.

Fertilizer: Not needed; thrives in poor soil.

## Tips for Success

Cold stratification improves germination.

Leave seed pods for natural reseeding.

Provides nectar for bees and Monarch butterflies.

Cut back old stems in late winter for new growth.

# Showy Milkweed

*Asclepias speciosa*

## Fun Fact

Showy Milkweed is one of the most important native milkweeds for Western Monarch butterfly populations.

## Companion Planting

Pairs well with coneflowers, yarrow, and blanket flowers for a pollinator-friendly garden.

## Harvesting and Use

Leave seed pods for reseeding or collect when they turn brown. Milkweed silk has been used for insulation and stuffing.

## Quick Planting Checklist

- Sow in fall or cold-stratify seeds
- Thin seedlings to 18-24 inches apart
- Provide full sun
- Low water needs once established