



PLANTING MILKWEED SEEDS

1. Harvest Milkweed seed pods in the fall (late Sept - late Oct) when the pods (2 pods provide hundreds of seeds) start to open. Place seed pods in a paper bag or zipper bag and store at room temp.
2. Prepare Seeds to Plant in March. First wet a sheet of paper towel. Then take brown milkweed seeds from your bag and scatter them all over the towels. Seeds can be close together. Wet the 2nd sheet of paper towel and lay it over top of the seeds. Place carefully in a large ziplock bag and refrigerate for one month on a low shelf. To let it lay flat, I place between 2 sheets of cardboard.
3. Plant seeds a month later. First prepare 2 or more trays by filling soil to peat pots or plastic seed trays (6-10 seed compartments in each). Water soil ahead so it is moist all the way through. Next put 2 seeds about ½" deep in each small pot. Last take some moist soil and put about ½ tsp of soil over the seeds in each hole. Place in sunny window indoors. Keeping moist throughout this time. Seeds should sprout in 1-2 weeks.
4. Growing: Keep trays in a sunny location (for 2-4 weeks) to reach a height of 3-5". Check daily to keep moist. Add water as needed. Don't soak.
5. Prepare soil and plant. Try a corner location where 6-12 plants can grow and not spread into other flower beds. Dig holes for each plant about 10" deep (add soil back to this hole) and plant 10-12" apart. Check that no rocks will interfere with the tap root that will grow deep into the soil. Carefully place each plant in prepared hole and pat the soil around each plant. Water once a week especially when there is little rain.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Fertilizer is seldom necessary.
2. Usually milkweed do not flower the first year,
3. Monarchs will still lay their tiny, pearly eggs under the leaves even if there are no flowers.
4. If milkweed leaves suddenly looked chewed in late August and September, you can carefully look for monarch caterpillars on your milkweed plants... success!
5. If you use peat pots, carefully cut the bottom off of each pot before planting the milkweed plant. With plastic pots, carefully remove each plant so as not to disturb the root.
6. If you want to grow milkweed in other gardens or to share with others, grow new plants with seeds. Milkweed plants do not like to be transplanted!
7. Once established, after 2-3 years, milkweed require very little care. They come up in April - June as perennials.
8. These seeds are called common milkweed. Several other kinds grow in the northeast including swamp milkweed. Milkweed also grow easily near Butterfly Weed (not Butterfly Bush) which also attract monarchs and other butterflies.
9. You may be surprised to know that monarch butterflies from our area spend winters in valleys in Mexico. But one monarch butterfly cannot make the entire journey there, it must stop and lay eggs, that monarch dies. This process repeats several times, and the new monarchs continue to travel to Mexico.
10. WEBISTE FOR FOR USER FRIENDLY MILKWEED PLANTING TIPS : www.Americanmeadows.com. Look for * How to Germinate and Grow Milkweed Seeds