

Asclepias syriaca L.

Fam: Apocynaceae

Common milkweed

Synonyms : *Asclepias cornuti* Decne, *Asclepias intermedia* Vail, *Asclepias kansan* Vail *Asclepias syriaca* L. var. *kansan* (Vail) Palmer & Steyerem.

Ecology : In the Netherlands common milkweed is found in the dunes where it can form a dense stands of vegetation. Elsewhere it also occurs on sandy soils, agricultural fields, open forests, along roads and on wasteland. Common milkweed forms rhizomes. It used to be found in the horticultural trade as an ornamental plant, and is considered by some to be beneficial for bees.

Threat : In the dunes, and some other areas, common milkweed behaves invasively.

Control : Cutting and mowing induces vigorous re-sprouting of the plant. Uprooting the plant., including the rhizomes, is an effective way to control the species.

Identification / similar species : Common milkweed can be confused with *Asclepias purpurescens*. The latter can be differentiated by it's dark purple flowers, terminal inflorescences and smooth fruits.

This species is on the list of invasive alien species of Union concern ('the Union list') pursuant to regulation (EU) no.1143/2014.



Foto: B. van Hoogstraten

