

Milkweed (Common)

Common Milkweed begins to grow from a thick, fleshy root later in spring. Thick leaves emerge, forming a clump of foliage. Then, from mid-spring to late summer, umbels of fragrant, pink to mauve flowers appear that are so generous with nectar that they attract pollinators of all kinds.

Type: Perennial

Height: 60-90 cm (24-36")

Exposure: Full sun

Difficulty: Easy



Growing

Cold stratification is the process of breaking seed dormancy through chilling. To artificially cold stratify seeds, place them on a damp paper towel in a sealed bag in the refrigerator for 3-4 weeks before sowing directly outside or starting indoors. To provide natural stratification, plant seeds outside in the fall for next season's blooms.

Sow seeds shallowly at only 3mm (1/8") deep. Seeds should sprout in 2-4 weeks. Keep seedlings moist but not wet. Transplant outside after a hardening off period. Space plants at 30-90cm (12-36") apart.

Saving

At the end of the growing season, pick flower pods as they turn brown, dry, and mature. Seed clusters can then be removed carefully from the milkweed pod. When fully ripe and dried, the seeds will be easily separated from the floss. Let them dry for a week or so in a cool, dry location. Put the seeds into a dated and labelled envelope and return to Brock!