

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

ASCLEPIAS ARENARIA
SAND MILKWEED
Family: Asclepiadaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.
Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

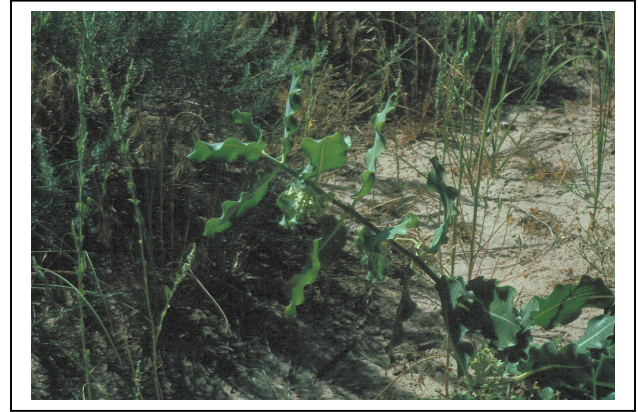
Global: G5? State: S1
WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral
Medium Wyoming Significance

Description: Sand milkweed is a perennial herb with a deep rhizome. The stems are solitary, 2-5 dm tall, and moderately to densely hairy. The leaves are opposite and somewhat rectangular to ovate, (2) 5-10 cm long by (1.5) 3-7.5 cm wide, and sparsely to densely hairy. The inflorescences have 25-50 flowers, are few to several, and are scattered in the leaf axils in the upper 1/3-2/3 of the plant. The flowers are 11-14 mm tall with hairy, green to purplish calyx lobes and pale green, reflexed corolla lobes. The gynostegia (fused reproductive parts) are white to cream and hairless. The hoods are somewhat rectangular and attached near the base, with two pairs of lobes on the margins. The horns are hooked and have linear tips. The follicles are 7-9 cm long by 1.5-2.5 cm thick, broadly spindle-shaped, and without bumps (Great Plains Flora Association 1986, Dorn 2001).

Similar Species: *Asclepias cryptoceras* has hairless herbage and inflorescence.

A. speciosa has flowers 15-28 mm tall, pale rose to pinkish cream gynostegia, and sharp bumps on its follicles. *A. viridiflora* has pale green gynostegia and no horns.

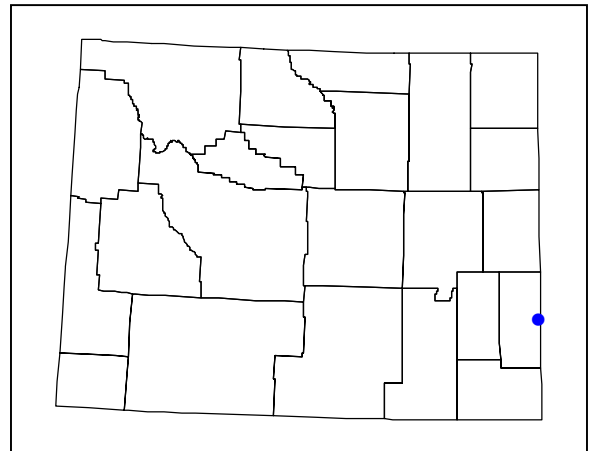
Flowering/Fruiting Period: Late June-July.



Above: *Asclepias arenaria*

Distribution: South Dakota to northern Mexico, east to Kansas and Texas. In Wyoming, known from the Southeastern Plains in Goshen County.

Habitat: Sandy soils of upland prairies and roadsides (Great Plains Flora Association 1986). Wyoming populations are found on sandhill communities dominated by *Artemisia filifolia* and *Calamovilfa longifolia* at 4200 feet.



Wyoming distribution of *Asclepias arenaria*

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from a single occurrence in Wyoming, first observed in 1986 and last surveyed in 1997.

Abundance: Population size not known, but limited to a small area.

Range: Peripheral; In Wyoming known only from the sandhills near Torrington in the Southeast Plains (Goshen County).

Trends: Not known.

Protection status: No occurrences are on lands receiving special management attention.

Threats: May be moderately threatened by loss of habitat or trampling by vehicles.

Managed Areas: Found partially on lands managed by the BLM Casper District.

References:

Dorn, R.D. 2001. Vascular Plants of Wyoming, third edition. Mountain West Publishing, Cheyenne, WY.

Great Plains Flora Association. 1986. Flora of the Great Plains. Univ. Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS.

Author: Joy Handley and Walter Fertig

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