

***Asclepias welshii* N& P. Holmgren**
Welsh's Milkweed

Family: Asclepiadaceae

Synonyms: None

NESL Status: G3

Federal Status: Listed Threatened (52 FR 41435 41441)

Plant Description: Herbaceous perennial from extensive underground rootstock; stems erect, stout, 2.5 – 10 dm tall; leaves 6 – 9 (15) cm long, 3 – 6 (8) cm broad, opposite, elliptic to ovate or obovate, rounded to truncate and mucronate apically, rounded to cordate basally; young growth densely woolly, upper leaves with short petiole, lower leaves without petiole. Flowers cream-colored with a rose-tinged middle, 12 – 14 mm wide, in a tight spherical inflorescence, 7 cm wide, with ca. 30 flowers. Flowering occurs from June to July; seed development and dispersal occur from July to early September. The juvenile form of this species has long, linear leaves. Because of the differences between juvenile and mature plants, juveniles are easily overlooked or misidentified.

Similar Species: Recognized by its large seeds (20+ mm long), spreading to pendulous follicles, cottony-pubescent pedicles, and the main leaves obovate to broadly elliptic, rounded to truncate apically.

Habitat: Active sand dunes derived from Navajo sandstone in sagebrush, juniper, and ponderosa pine communities. Known populations occur from 5000 to 6230 ft elevation.

General Distribution: Kane Co, UT, northern AZ.

Navajo Nation Distribution: Coconino Co, north of Tuba City, south of Monument Valley in Navajo & Apache counties.

Potential Navajo Nation Distribution: All active sand dunes between Page and Tuba City, east to the Chinle Creek drainage.

Survey Period: June through September. Suitable habitat can be identified year round.

Recommended Avoidance: A 200 ft buffer zone is recommended to avoid disturbance; maybe more or less, depending on size and nature of the project

References:

- Arizona Rare Plant Committee. 2001. Arizona rare plant field guide: a collaboration of agencies and organizations. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. <http://aznps.org/rareplants.html>
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- Cronquist, A. et al., eds. 1984. Intermountain Flora, Volume 4. The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York.
- Kelly, K. and J. McGinnis. 1994. Highly Safeguarded Protected Native Plants of Arizona. Arizona Department of Agriculture, Phoenix, AZ.
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. 1992. Welsh's Milkweed (*Asclepias welshii*) Recovery Plan. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Denver, Colorado. 19pp.
- Utah Rare Plant Guide Team. 2003. Utah Rare Plant Guide. Utah Native Plant Society. <http://www.utahrareplants.org/>
- Welsh, S.L., N.D. Atwood, S. Goodrich, L.C. Higgins. 2003. A Utah Flora: Third Edition. Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.



Asclepias welshii – juvenile plants
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Asclepias welshii

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Asclepias welshii habitat

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