

## Common Milkweed



Emerging shoot.



Vegetative plants. Key characteristics: opposite leaves with prominent white midveins.



Flowering plant. Key characteristics: stems are red and contain a white milky sap. Leaves are opposite with entire margins.



Flower. Key characteristics: color ranges from white to purple; flowers occur in the terminal portion of the plant and upper leaf axils.



Fruit and seed. Key characteristics: long hairs attached to the flat seed are easily detached. Seed are flattened, oval-shaped and have a length of approximately 7.0 to 8.0 mm.

Life cycle: perennial.

**Toxic Plant:** All animals may be affected; sheep are most at risk, but cattle, goats, horses, poultry, and pets are also at risk. Generally, livestock avoid grazing milkweeds unless there are no other available forages. Stems, leaves and roots are all toxic. Gastrointestinal irritation (primarily vomiting and diarrhea), incoordination, tremors, heart problems, respiratory difficulty and death have been reported to occur.