



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Showy Milkweed

Asclepias speciosa

DESCRIPTION: Showy Milkweed is a hairy perennial, with three foot tall stems and large gray five inch leaves, The flowers are 4" to 5" fragrant clusters looking like a Forth of July fireworks. The petals have been described as antique or Victorian rose. These are followed by 4" "horns" (fruits). In our area *Asclepias speciosa* can be covered with Monarch or Queen caterpillars during the summer. One plant can form a large clump by its spreading rhizomes. It is native to the western half of North America. Many Native American peoples use all parts of this plant for a great number of medicinal uses and ate some parts as a food.

RECOMMENDED USE: Showy Milkweed is great for a bird garden and a butterfly garden. It is rhizomatous and can be aggressive and therefore may not be suitable for small landscape plantings. It can be contained by keeping it in a pot, or keeping irrigation at the base, surrounded by several feet of un-irrigated soil.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: 10°F.



Sun tolerance: It needs sun to very light shade.



Watering and feeding: It is fairly drought tolerant once established, but responds well to regular watering from April through September. Feed in the spring.



Soil requirements: Tolerates clay and alkaline soils.



Pruning: Showy Milkweed is winter dormant and can be cut back to the ground in late fall.