

# LEARN THE FACTS

# TROPICAL MILKWEED



## HOST PLANT

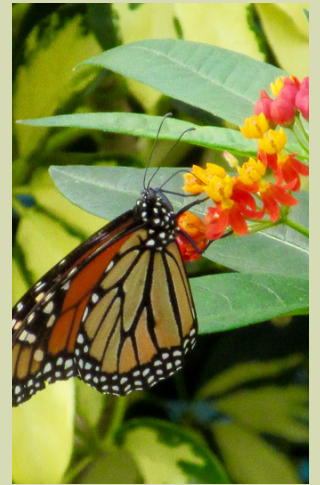
Milkweed is the ONLY host plant for Monarch butterflies. They will not lay their eggs on any other plant.

Tropical Milkweed is an available, easy to grow option.



## NECTAR PLANT

Tropical Milkweed not only feeds butterflies with its nectar, other pollinators are attracted to it as well.



## PROPER CARE = SAFE PLANT

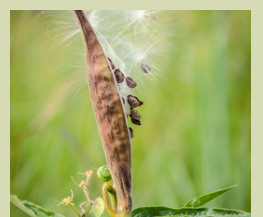
Unlike native milkweeds, tropical milkweed does not naturally die back in the winter. Gardeners must mimic this natural cycle by cutting tropical milkweed to the ground after the migration periods have ceased in order to prevent Monarchs from hanging around when they naturally need to be on their way.

Tropical Milkweed MUST be cut down after the fall butterfly migration in San Antonio. We also advise another heavy prune after the spring migration. A more conservative prune in late summer (by 1/3 or 1/2) will rejuvenate milkweed and encourage fall blooms.

Once tropical milkweed has been cut back, allow the wounds to heal a few days, then spray with a mixture of 50% water to 50% isopropyl alcohol (91% strength). Don't spray during heat of day. This helps to further protect monarchs by sterilizing the plant



## RESEARCH IS KNOWLEDGE



Tropical milkweed that is not cut down can lead to an increased build up of the monarch-centric spore OE. The concern is that butterflies who visit improperly cared for Tropical Milkweeds may infect other caterpillars, butterflies, and plants by spreading the spore.

There are multiple studies that question whether changing day lengths and temperatures are more detrimental to the viability of monarch butterflies.

Make sure to do plenty of research on both sides of the argument, and come to your own decision on whether or not you choose to use tropical milkweed. Let's kindly remember that others are doing research as well and making their own choices.

## NATIVES ARE BEST, BUT HARDER TO FIND AND GROW

Tropical is more readily available from growers. It's a lot easier to find and it's a lot easier to grow as well. Native milkweeds are always encouraged (we love our native plants with a passion), but they are generally harder to find from growers and growing from seed can be very challenging for the average home gardener.

With tropical milkweed, you can enjoy the butterflies throughout their migrations if you just CUT THE DARN PLANT DOWN afterwards!



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