

horsetail milkweed *Asclepias verticillate*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Gentianales

Family: Asclepiadaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Horsetail milkweed is also known as whorled milkweed. This perennial herb has linear, sessile leaves in whorls of three to seven along the stem. The leaf margins may be slightly rolled. Clusters of small, green-white flowers develop in the leaf axils. The flowers are typical milkweed flowers, with five petals pointing toward the ground supporting an upward-pointing crown of other flower parts. The fruit is a dry, podlike structure that splits along one side at maturity to release the winged seeds. Horsetail milkweed may attain a height of one to two feet.

BEHAVIORS

Horsetail milkweed may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in dry, rocky woods, dry prairies and fields. Flowers are produced from May through September. The flowers are pollinated by insects, while the seeds are dispersed by the wind.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

coniferous forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; edge; hill prairie; shrub prairie

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2016. Biodiversity of Illinois.