

poke milkweed *Asclepias exaltata*

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Gentianales

Family: Asclepiadaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS uncommon, native

FEATURES

Growing to a height of from three to six feet, this plant has stalked leaves in pairs along the stem. The sap is milky white, and the five petals of each flower point back to the flower stalk while supporting a five-parted central cup. Flowers in this species are white and may have some purple or green showing. Flower clusters arise on a stalk from the base of the leaf and droop toward the ground. The fruit is a pod that contains seeds attached to silky strands that aid in dispersal by the wind.

BEHAVIORS

Poke milkweed grows in woodland edges throughout Illinois, although it is not common in any part of the state. Flowers are produced in June and July.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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