

WINTER 2014

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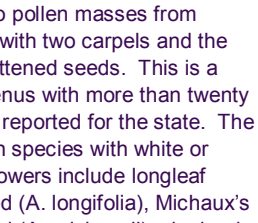
NEXT MEETING: MAY 10, 2014

SO YOU WANT TO JOIN US OR RE-JOIN?

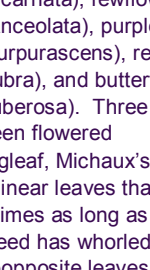
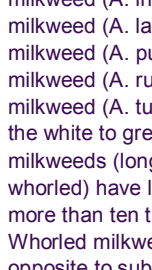
Louisiana Milkweeds (Asclepias)

By Charles Allen

The genus *Asclepias* (milkweeds) include mostly native perennial herbaceous species in the Asclepiadaceae and is a Dicot. All species have milky sap except for butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*). The leaves are simple, entire, pinnately veined and mostly opposite but whorled or alternate to subopposite in some species. The inflorescences are umbels that are cymosely or corymbosely arranged. The flowers are perfect, regular, and with five sepals, petals, and stamens. The petals are usually strongly reflexed and the five filaments are modified into five hoods that form a corona round the ovary. Most species also have horns on the corona. The pollen is produced in pollinia with each pollinium formed of two pollen masses from adjacent anthers. The ovary is superior with two carpels and the fruit is a follicle with distinctly comose flattened seeds. This is a



Asclepias amplexicaulis

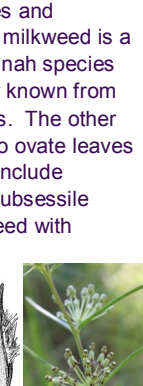
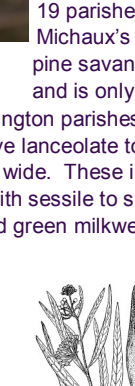


Asclepias curassavica

large genus with more than twenty species reported for the state. The common species with white or green flowers include longleaf milkweed (*A. longifolia*), Michaux's milkweed (*A. michauxii*), pineland milkweed (*A. obovata*), white milkweed (*A. variegata*), whorled milkweed (*A. verticillata*), green comet milkweed (*A. viridiflora*), and

two species, swamp milkweed or aquatic milkweed (*A. perennis*) and common milkweed (*A. syriaca*) have flowers that range from white to pink. The species with pink, rose, purple, red or yellow flowers include clasping milkweed (*A. amplexicaulis*), Brazilian milkweed (*A. curassavica*), pinewoods milkweed (*A. humistrata*), swamp milkweed (*A. incarnata*), fewflower milkweed (*A. lanceolata*), purple milkweed (*A. purpurascens*), red milkweed (*A. rubra*), and butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*). Three of the white to green flowered

milkweeds (longleaf, Michaux's, and whorled) have linear leaves that are more than ten times as long as wide. Whorled milkweed has whorled leaves while the other two have opposite to subopposite leaves. Michaux's milkweed has a solitary umbel and a corona that is more than 5 mm across while longleaf milkweed has two to five umbels and a corona that is less than 5 mm across. Whorled milkweed is a prairie and open pine forest



Asclepias incarnata

species that is scattered across the state with reports from 25 parishes. Longleaf milkweed is a bog and pine savannah species with reports from 19 parishes and Michaux's milkweed is a pine savannah species and is only known from

St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington parishes. The other white to green flowered species all have lanceolate to ovate leaves that are less than ten times as long as wide. These include pineland and green comet milkweed with sessile to subsessile inflorescences and white milkweed and green milkweed with pedunculate inflorescences. Pineland milkweed has a corona that is more than 5 mm across while the corona in green comet milkweed is less than 3 mm in diameter. Both are common species of open pine forests and the Cajun Prairie with reports from 19 parishes for pineland milkweed and 17 for green comet milkweed. White

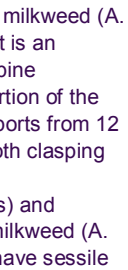
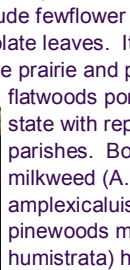
milkweed has pure white flowers, is an erect plant, and is found in shaded hardwood forests while green milkweed is a spreading plant with green flowers and is usually seen in open areas, especially prairies. White milkweed is reported from 36 parishes and green milkweed from 34. The two species with white to pink flowers (*A. perennis* and *A. syriaca*) also have

lanceolate to ovate leaves and pedunculate inflorescences. The differences between the two species is that *A. perennis* has pedicels that are shorter than 3 cm and coronas that are narrower than 3 mm while in *A. syriaca*, the pedicels are longer than 3 cm and the coronas narrower than 3 mm. The habitat and distribution are also different with *A. perennis* inhabiting wet areas such as swamps and wet roadside ditches

throughout the state in probably all parishes with current reports from 56 parishes while *A. syriaca* is a plant of disturbed areas in Lincoln, Morehouse, and Ouachita parishes. The most distinctive of the pink, rose, purple, red or yellow flowered milkweeds is butterfly milkweed (*A. tuberosa*) with alternate leaves and non-milky sap. It is widespread in the pine and prairie regions of the state

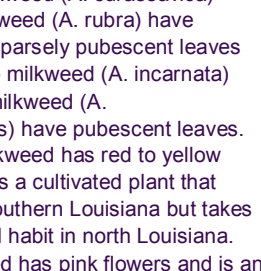
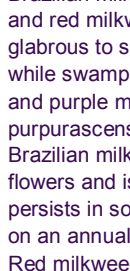


Asclepias obovata



Asclepias longifolia

with reports from 34 parishes. All the other species with these color of flowers have opposite leaves and include fewflower milkweed (*A. lanceolata*) with linear to narrowly lanceolate leaves. It is an infrequent plant of wet areas mainly in the prairie and pine

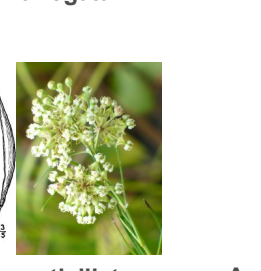


Asclepias rubra

flatwoods portion of the state with reports from 12 parishes. Both clasping milkweed (*A. amplexicaulis*) and pinewoods milkweed (*A. humistrata*) have sessile clasping leaves. Clasping milkweed is widespread in dry sandy soil with reports from 25 parishes while pinewoods milkweed is known only from St. Tammany and Washington parishes. Clasping milkweed is an erect plant with a solitary terminal umbel and corona that is 5 mm or wider while pinewoods milkweed is a spreading plant with two to five umbels, and a corona that is narrower than 5 mm. Both

Brazilian milkweed (*A. curassavica*) and red milkweed (*A. rubra*) have glabrous to sparsely pubescent leaves while swamp milkweed (*A. incarnata*) and purple milkweed (*A. purpurascens*) have pubescent leaves. Brazilian milkweed has red to yellow flowers and is a cultivated plant that persists in southern Louisiana but takes on an annual habit in north Louisiana.

Red milkweed has pink flowers and is an infrequent plant of baygalls and bogs in west central Louisiana with reports from Beauregard, Natchitoches, Rapides, and Vernon parishes. Swamp milkweed (*A. incarnata*) has lanceolate leaves and is a plant of the marsh with reports from Jefferson, LaFourche, St.

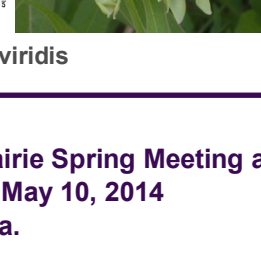


Asclepias purpurascens

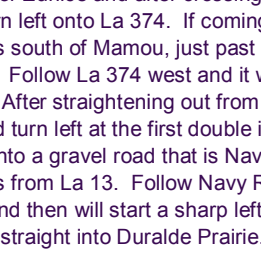
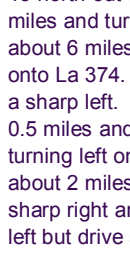


Asclepias syriaca

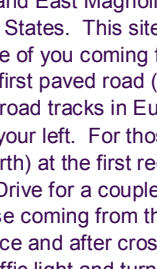
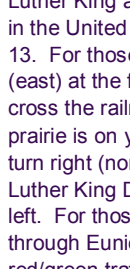
Charles, and Terrebonne parishes while purple milkweed has ovate leaves and inhabits well-drained forests in Caldwell and Lincoln parishes.



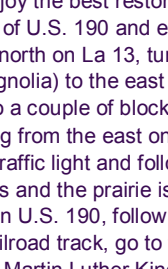
Asclepias tuberosa



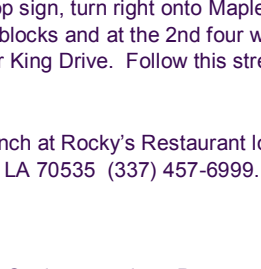
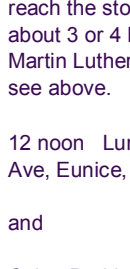
Asclepias variegata



Asclepias verticillata



Asclepias viridifolia



Asclepias viridis

Cajun Prairie Spring Meeting and Tours

Saturday May 10, 2014

Eunice, La.

8:00 AM: Tours of Duralde Restored Prairie. Directions: Take LA 13 north out of Eunice and after crossing a bridge, go about 1.5 miles and turn left onto La 374. If coming from the north on La 13, about 6 miles south of Mamou, just past the Fire Station, turn right onto La 374. Follow La 374 west and it will take a sharp right then a sharp left. After straightening out from the sharp left, go about 0.5 miles and turn left at the first double intersection. You will be turning left onto a gravel road that is Navy Road. Navy Road is about 2 miles from La 13. Follow Navy Road and it will take a sharp right and then will start a sharp left but you will not turn at the left but drive straight into Duralde Prairie.

10:00 AM: Eunice Restored Prairies; meet at the corners of Martin Luther King and East Magnolia and enjoy the best restored prairie in the United States. This site is north of U.S. 190 and east of La 13. For those of you coming from the north on La 13, turn left (east) at the first paved road (East Magnolia) to the east after you cross the railroad tracks in Eunice. Go a couple of blocks and the prairie is on your left. For those coming from the east on U.S. 190 turn right (north) at the first red/green traffic light and follow Martin Luther King Drive for a couple of blocks and the prairie is on your left. For those coming from the west on U.S. 190, follow U.S. 190 through Eunice and after crossing a railroad track, go to the next red/green traffic light and turn left onto Martin Luther King Drive (See above). For those coming from the south on La 13, when you reach the stop sign, turn right onto Maple Ave. Follow Maple for about 3 or 4 blocks and at the 2nd four way stop sign, turn left onto Martin Luther King Drive. Follow this street across U.S. 190 and see above.

12 noon Lunch at Rocky's Restaurant located at 1415 E Laurel Ave, Eunice, LA 70535 (337) 457-6999.

and

Cajun Prairie Society meeting. Presentation to be determined

For more details about the meeting and or tours, contact Dr. Charles Allen 337-328-2252 or email native@camtel.net.