

# HOW TO: GROW TROPICAL MILKWEED



Milkweed is an essential plant for the survival of the Monarch Butterfly, as it is the only plant on which the Monarch Butterfly will lay its eggs. One caterpillar will eat 20+ large leaves before it becomes a butterfly. If you would like to learn more about Monarch Butterfly conservation efforts, please visit [www.livemonarch.com](http://www.livemonarch.com). Thank you for helping to grow Milkweed to plant in KNCB's butterfly gardens and to distribute to the community and schools in North Charleston.

## HOW TO GROW:

- You should start your seeds by mid-January.
- Place your seeds in a cup of warm water for 24 hours before planting. (Use a cup that doesn't have a hole in the bottom. Do not use the same cups you will be using for planting.)
- Write the date planted on your cup with a sharpie.
- Fill the cup  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way with a 'seed-starting potting soil' and gently add water. Water should be able to drain through the cup.
- Once the soil is damp, place two holes in the soil then put a seed into each hole. Space the holes far enough away that they have room to grow.
- To finish, place  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch of soil on top of the seed. Leave a little room at the top of the cup.
- Spray the soil with a water bottle then place the cups by a sunny window.
- The Milkweed should be mature in about two to three months.



## WATERING:

Gently water your planted seeds. Before you have a seedling, spray the soil with a water bottle until damp. After you have a seedling (with roots), the best way to water in from the bottom up. Pour  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of water into the tray and let your plant suck the water up through its roots.

Don't overwater your plant. Water every day or every other day as needed. Touch your soil to see if it is damp. If it is dry you need to add water. Do not add water to your cup until it has dried out.



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