



Desert Milkweed *Asclepias erosa*, or *Asclepias subulata* Rush Milkweed

Description:

Height: 2'-6', or 0.5-2 meters

Flowers: Horns extend outside

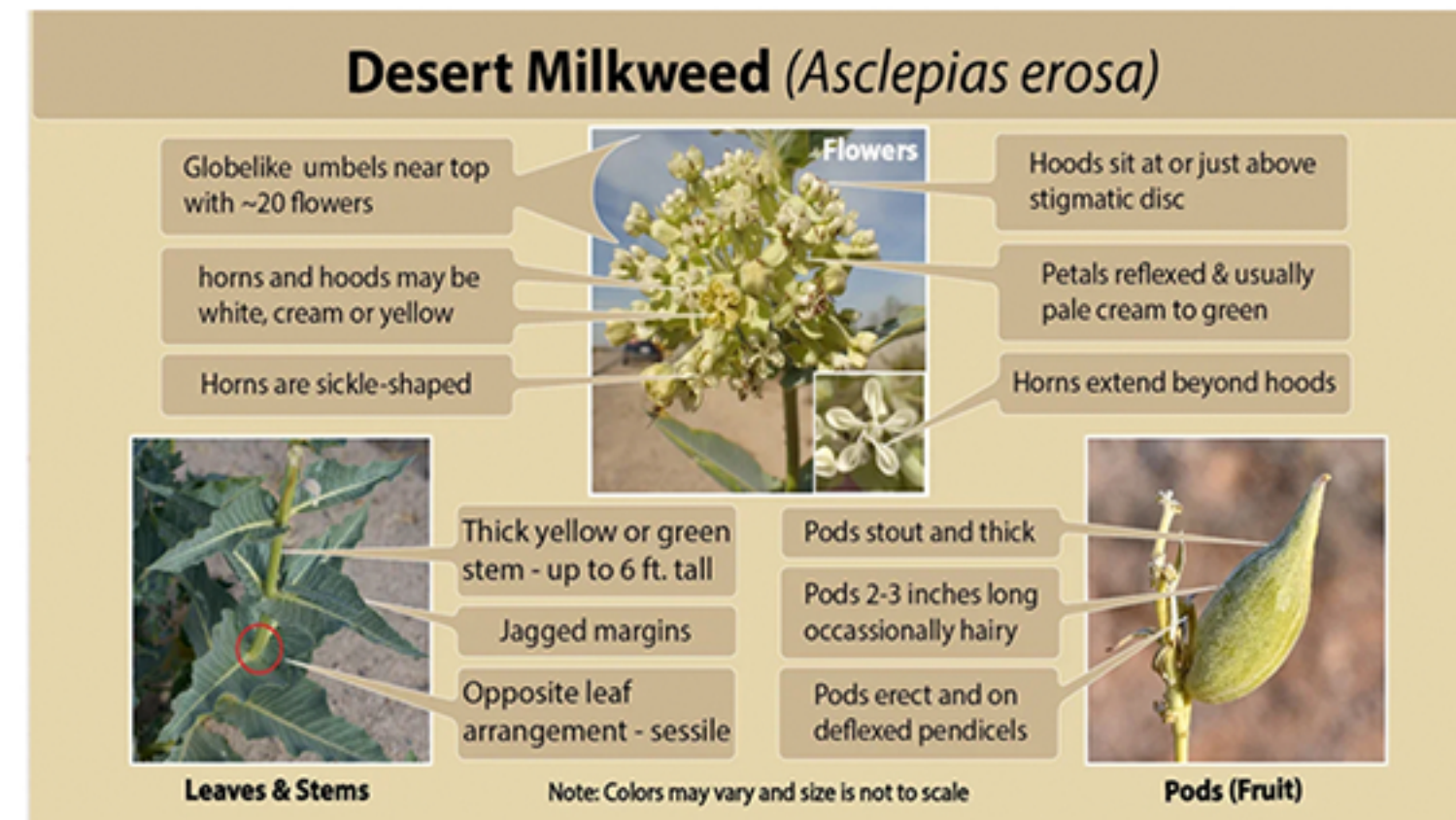
of the hoods, hoods sit just above the stigmatic disc, globe-like umbels grow near the top of the stem, umbels are erect with 20 or more flowers, petals are reflexed, horns are sickle-shaped

Leaf: Leaves are seen in several shades of green. The leaves are Ephemeral or short lived, and they come out after subsequent rainfall. Also the leaf shape is narrow.

Stem description: The stem can range from green to yellow and also as a young plant have hairy stems, but, as it matures, become hairless.

Uses:

The plant was used as a panacea, as a plant for all remedies.



It is considered cathartic, which was in the context of a physic to release emotions. The plant is considered poisonous but when properly prepared, it was also used for several physical ailments. The sap was used as an emetic to help cause vomiting, and a gastrointestinal aid, for pain or nausea. Ripe seeds could be roasted and ground into a salve for sores and burns.

Native Cultures:

The tribes that are known to use the Desert Milkweed were the Akimel O' Odham, Comaac

people, Cahuilla People, and Tübatulabal people. Some tribes boiled the latex from the plant to create chewing gum.

Habitats:

They grow in dry regions with desert landscapes, often found in mesas and plains. They are commonly found in elevations from around 500-6000 ft. Also they can grow in harsh temperatures. Found in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah.



Pollinators:

Milkweed is best known for attracting monarch butterflies but also attracting regional bees.

Flowering:

From April to October, the flowers have horns extending outside of the hoods; the hoods sit just above the stigmatic disc, globe-like umbels grow near the top of the stem, umbels are erect with 20 or more flowers, petals are reflexed, horns are sickle-shaped.

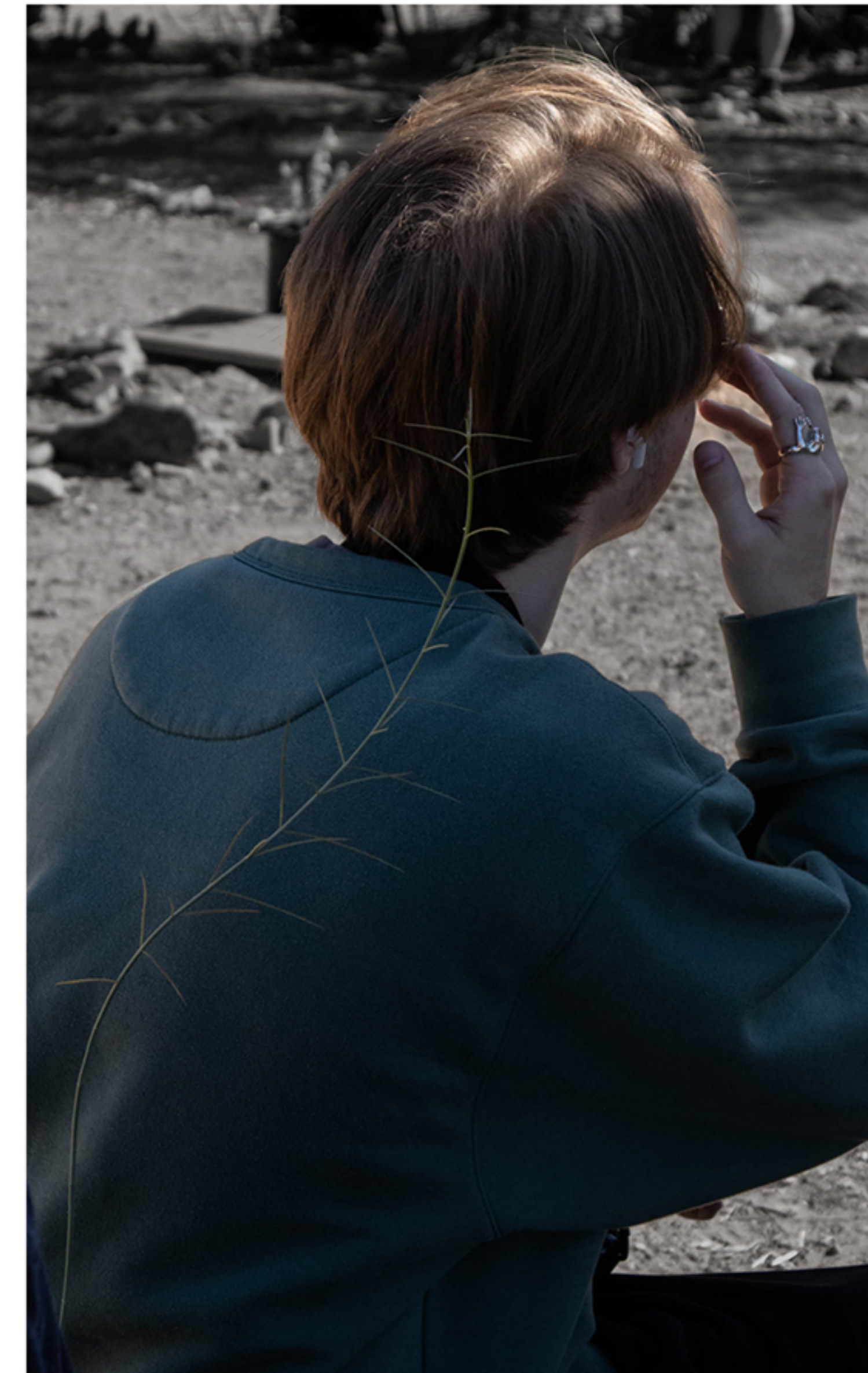


Image Resources:

Illustration: Desert Milkweed. (n.d.). Naturedigger. <https://www.naturedigger.com/desert-mw>

Photographs: Subs Balenalli