

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**Plant Abstract**

**Element Code:** PDASC050P0

**Data Sensitivity:** No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Metastelma mexicanum* (Brandeg.) Fishbein & R. A. Levin  
**COMMON NAME:** Milkweed Vine  
**SYNONYMS:** *Basistelma mexicanum* (Brandeg.) Bartlett; *Cynanchum wigginsii* Shinnery;  
*Melinia mexicana* Brandeg.  
**FAMILY:** Asclepiadaceae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** Fishbein, Mark & Levin, Rachel. 1997. Madrono 44: 270.

**TYPE LOCALITY:** Mexico: Sinaloa, about 30 mi east of Culican, near Durango border, Cerro Colorado.

**TYPE SPECIMEN:** GH! T. S. Brandege sn. 1904.

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** Similar to *Metastelma arizonica*.

**DESCRIPTION:** Vine with many slender, twining stems. **Leaves short-petioled or sessile, narrow, like slender arrowhead**, with backward-pointing lobe on each side of base, about 10.0-15.0 mm (0.4-0.6 in.) long and 2.0-3.0 mm (0.08-0.12 in.) wide. **Typical milkweed flowers**, few per cluster, scattered along stem. Flower parts white-creamy, about 3.0 mm (0.12 in.) long. Fruit narrow, pod-like, about 3.0 cm (1.2 in.) long.

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:** Stigma long-beaked; leaves short-petioled or sessile, long, narrow; corolla white-pilose within. Could be confused with *Janusia*. However, *Janusia* does not have milky sap or stems that twine around itself.

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Line drawing (USFWS)

**TOTAL RANGE:** Southeastern Arizona to southern Sonora, Mexico. (Mexican plant that has expanded into Arizona.)

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** Santa Cruz County: around Nogales and Ruby, Sycamore Canyon area, Patagonia Mountains; Cochise County: Mule Mountains, range extension to Sabino Canyon, Bisbee area; Pima County: Baboquivari Mountains, Coyote Mountains and Catalina Mountains.

**SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**GROWTH FORM:** Perennial vine (herbaceous vine with woody base).

**PHENOLOGY:** Flowers with summer rains.

**BIOLOGY:** Unknown.

**HABITAT:** Open slopes within open oak woodland on granitic soils over Juniper Flats granite.

**ELEVATION:** 3,500 - 5,550 ft (1067 - 1693 m).

**EXPOSURE:****SUBSTRATE:** Various.**PLANT COMMUNITY:** Oak woodland.**POPULATION TRENDS:** Appears to be stable. Insects are threat. Not browse plant. Depends on vegetation for habit so plant would be affected by disturbance to habitat.**SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION**

**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:** None (USDI, FWS 1996)  
[Category 2 USDI, FWS 1985]  
[3C USDI, FWS 1983]  
[Category 1 USDI, FWS 1980]

**STATE STATUS:** None

**OTHER STATUS:** Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS Region 3 1990, 1999)

**MANAGEMENT FACTORS:** Rare.**CONSERVATION MEASURES TAKEN:** Known from Goodding Research Natural Area, Sycamore Canyon**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:** Survey/relocate old sites. (Botanists unable to relocate population at known locality in Sycamore Canyon in 1989 and 1990).**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** BLM - Tucson Field Office; USFS - Coronado National Forest; Private.**SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****LITERATURE CITATIONS:**

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- Kearney, T.H. and R.H. Peebles. 1960. Arizona flora (with supplement). University of California Press. Berkeley. p. 663 (*Basistelma*).
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- Phillips, A.M. III, B.G. Phillips, L.T. Green III, J. Mazzoni, and N. Brian. 1982. Status report on *Cynanchum wigginsii* Shinnery. For U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico. 11 pp.
- Shinnery, L.H. 1964. SIDA 1(6):358-367.
- Toolin, L., T. Van Devender and J. Kaiser. 1979. Journal of the Arizona-Nevada Academy of Science. 14:66-74
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- USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service. 1980. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Review of Plant Taxa for Listing as Endangered or Threatened Species. Federal Register 45(242):82501.
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- Wentworth, T.R. 1978. Journal of the Arizona-Nevada Academy of Science. 13:18.

**MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**

Jack Kaiser - Retired (USDA), Nogales, Arizona.

Tom Van Devender - Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson, Arizona.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Kearney and Peebles (1960): "Not known in Arizona but the type was collected at Santa Cruz, Sonora, only a few miles south of the Arizona border."

Van Devender: Only Mexican collection is from Palm Canyon, about 17 miles southeast of Magdalena.

**Revised:** 1991-11-10 (PLW)  
1991-12-04 (SR)  
1994-10-10 (PLW)  
1998-01-06(SSS)  
2000-03-03 (JCP)

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