

***Asclepias subverticillata* Germination**

Dave Smith, Arizona Ecological Services Office in Flagstaff, has been collecting milkweed seeds from local sites around the Flagstaff area to use in monarch butterfly habitat projects in the local area. He sent western whirled milkweed seeds to the Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Research Station greenhouse in Moscow, Idaho. The researchers were interested in experimenting with methods to improve milkweed seed germination. They determined that prewashing the seed for 48-hours under running cold water resulted in a 95 to 96 percent germination rate.

Dave didn't want to run a cold water faucet for 48-hours. He remembered that his roof had been recently covered with a few feet of snow and was currently melting providing flowing cold water. Dave placed 200 milkweed seeds in a screen pouch and placed it under the downspout.



However, due to recent warm weather, the snow was quickly melting. To his neighbor's amusement, Dave began throwing snow back up on to his roof to continue the pre-washing of his milkweed seed. The good news is that it is supposed to rain soon in Flagstaff; eliminating the need to augment melting snow on the roof. Dave will plant the milkweed seeds in containers to be used for monarch butterfly projects this spring.

