

POLYGALACEAE – MILKWORT FAMILY

Plant: herbs, shrubs and trees, rarely vines

Stem: sometimes square

Root:

Leaves: simple, entire, mostly alternate to rarely opposite or whorled; no stipules but sometimes glands present

Flowers: perfect; many irregular (zygomorphic), often with many tiny flowers; 5 (4-6-7) usually separate sepals with 2 lateral which are colored (wings); 3 or 5 petals connected into a tube, often fringed; 3-10 stamens, usually 8 (in sets of 4); ovary superior, usually 2 carpels

Fruit: capsule usually, 2-chambered, seeds often hairy; others types sometimes

Other: Dicotyledons Group

Genera: 17+ genera; locally *Polygala* (milkwort)

POLYGALACEAE – MILKWORT FAMILY

Cross Milkwort [Drumheads]; *Polygala cruciata* L. var. *Aquilonia* Fern. & Schub.

Pink Milkwort [Procession Flower]; *Polygala incarnata* L.

Orange Milkwort [Red-Hot Poker]; *Polygala lutea* L.

Candyroot; *Polygala nana* (Michx.) DC.

Racemed Milkwort; *Polygala polygama* Walt.

Field [Purple] Milkwort; *Polygala sanguinea* L.

Seneca Snakeroot; *Polygala senega* L.

Cross Milkwort

[Drumheads]

Polygala cruciata L. var. *aquilonia*

Fern. & Schub.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Kitty Todd Nature Preserve, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: 3 petaled flower, one fringed and shorter than 2 larger side petals, 5 sepals – inner 2 sharp-pointed with deltoid-like base, rose-purple to somewhat greenish in dense head; leaves 3-4 whorled, linear to somewhat lanceolate, thick; often in sandy soils; summer to early fall

[V Max Brown, 2007]



Pink Milkwort

[Procession Flower]



Polygala incarnata L.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Chaparral Prairie State Nature Preserve,
Adams County, Ohio

Notes: 3-petaled flower, one fringed, pink,
to pinkish purple to white, 5 colored
sepals, in terminal clusters or racemes;
leaves alternate, linear, usually gone at
flowering time or reduced to scales; stem
glabrous, somewhat glaucous, often
branched; summer to fall

[V Max Brown, 2009]



Orange Milkwort [Red-Hot Poker]

Polygala lutea L.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve,
Levy County, Florida

Notes: flower petals orange, united to form a tube, in compact racemes; leaves alternate, basal leaves succulent and spatulate, stem leaves more lanceolate; plant rarely over 206 in high; spring to fall

[V Max Brown, 2011]



Candyroot

Polygala nana (Michx.) DC.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve,
Levy County, Florida

Notes: flower petals lemon yellow, united to form a tube, in compact racemes; leaves mostly basal, numerous, mostly sessile, succulent and spatulate; plant rarely over 6 in high; spring to early summer

[V Max Brown, 2011]



Racemed [Purple] Milkwort

Polygala polygama Walt.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: 3 petaled flower, one fringed and shorter than 2 side petals, sepal wings large, pinkish-purple to rarely white, on short pedicel; leaves alternate, linear to lanceolate; stems mostly unbranched; summer

[V Max Brown, 2005]



Field [Purple] Milkwort

Polygala sanguinea L.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: 3-petaled flower, rose-purple, greenish to white, 5 sepals, in dense oblong head; leaves alternate, numerous, and linear to lanceolate; stem often unbranched but not always; summer to fall

[V Max Brown, 2005]



Seneca Snakeroot

Polygala senega L.

Polygalaceae (Milkwort Family)

Alley Springs, Ozark National Scenic

Riverways, Shannon County, Missouri

Notes: 3 petaled flower, one fringed and shorter than 2 side petals, sepal wings large, white to greenish white, in racemes; leaves alternate, lanceolate and tapering at both ends; stems mostly unbranched; late spring to summer

[V Max Brown, 2009]

