



APOCYNACEAE

OVERVIEW

- Family:** Apocynaceae
- Common Name:** Dogbane family
- Nomenclature:** The name comes from the Greek Apocynum, meaning “dog-away”.
- Popular Members:** *Plumeria*, oleander, milkweed, dogbane, periwinkle, carrion flower, and star jasmine. Numerous others.



MILKWEED



GEOGRAPHY

These plants primarily grow in tropical or subtropical areas.

CHARACTERISTICS

Milky, often poisonous sap, smooth-margined leaves, and flowers that are usually in clusters.

FRUIT

The fruit is most commonly a pod that will split at maturity, releasing winged or tufted seeds. In some instances, the fruit is a drupe or a berry.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Susceptible to many pests and diseases, including aphids, scales, caterpillars, mealybugs, glass-winged sharpshooter, whiteflies, and mites.

Diseases include bacterial blight, galls, leaf spots, sooty mold, and root rot.

Although caterpillars can be considered a pest, members of the milkweed subfamily Asclepiadoideae are an important host plant for butterflies in the *Danaus* genus, including the monarch butterfly.



STAR JASMINE



ORNAMENTAL

Many are grown as ornamental plants.

MEDICINAL + ECONOMIC

Used in pharmaceuticals, examples including antihypertensive and antipsychotic drugs, notably ibogaine, used to treat drug addiction.

HISTORICAL

Historically also used as an arrow poison and a source for rubber.