

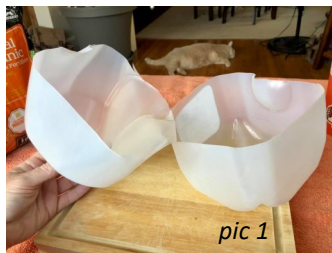
GROWING PLANTS IN MILK JUG GREENHOUSES

Growing native plants in small greenhouses using transparent milk jugs (or similar container) is easy and effective. This method emulates the cold winter conditions needed to cold stratify the seed (if needed) but also protects from birds/animals eating the seeds. Of course, this only works if you live in a climate that has a cold winter. In the Spring, the plants have a warm greenhouse to thrive in. Store your seeds in the refrigerator in a glass container or paper envelope. In January, make a milk jug greenhouse and put your greenhouse outside. It's as easy as that!

Materials needed: Transparent milk jug, scissors/razor, duct tape, potting soil, sharpie, popsicle sticks (optional)

Directions:

- Cut milk jug almost in half with scissors/razor leaving a hinge by the handle (pic 1)
- Poke some holes in the bottom of the jug for drainage
- Fill with a few inches of potting soil and sprinkle some seeds on it (pic 2)
- Cover with a small layer of potting soil and water lightly
- Write the name of the seed on a popsicle stick and put in the jug on the inside edge (optional) (pic 3)
- Close jug and tape shut around the area that was cut (pic 4)
- Write the name of the seed on the outside of the jug (this can wear off so the popsicle stick is a back up) Take the cap off the jug (you won't need this - the opening will let in rain/snow/air for your plants)
- Place outside in January and let nature do its thing (pic 5)
- Around April, you should see some plants emerge (pic 6). Don't open the container, just look in the top. The seeds/plants can handle the cold (even late April or May snowstorms). Remember, they are meant to grow outside anyway. Resist the urge to take them inside.
- Around May, your plants should be grown enough to be transplanted in the ground (pic 7 - this is Common Milkweed). Open the container and you can split these into hunks of plants and put them into the ground.



Expectations: No matter how you grow them, some species of plants may remain small the first year and may not flower. That's ok. They will go dormant in the winter and come back the following Spring/early Summer.