Stratification Instructions for Milkweed Seed

Milford Garden Club is giving away for FREE your choice of either:

Rose or Swamp Milkweed

Asclepias incarnata
(ah sclee pee us) *(in car nah tah)*
Best for average or wet areas

Orange Butterfly Milkweed

Asclepias tuberosa
(ah sclee pee us) (tube er oh sah)
Best for dry areas

MGC chose these milkweed because these ARE BEST for our Milford area and also unlike common milkweed that will go everywhere in your garden, these will **stay put** in a nice clump that expands slowly.

See how the seeds differ in size.
Rose or Swamp Milkweed seeds are much larger than Orange Butterfly Milkweed seeds.

Milkweed seed needs 30 days of exposure to cold moist conditions so they will **germinate.**
(THEY WILL NOT GERMINATE without this process either naturally or artificially. If you choose not to do this, that's fine, plant your seed in the fall after a killing frost.)
The process is called **stratification**. It happens naturally outdoors in the fall when the seedpods burst open and the seeds fly on their small parachutes falling to the ground to be exposed to cold and moisture over the winter.
If you don't want to wait until next year (are an impatient gardener like me) and want to get started planting this spring or summer, stratification can be done artificially by:

- taking ¼ cup clean sand (can be purchased at a pet store) dumping it into a sandwich size plastic bag
- adding ¼ teaspoon of hot water, kneading the water into the sand
- adding the seeds to the water sand mixture, shaking the bag so all the seeds are covered by sand
- labeling the bag with the name of your seed, pressing the air out and securely closing the bag
- putting all in the refrigerator for 30 days, being sure there are NO apples or other fruits in the refrigerator with your seed because ripening fruit gives off ethylene gas that will KILL your seed.

Log onto this link to watch a 2 ½ minute video that shows how to stratify your seeds: http://youtu.be/wkYx_5lvurw
Have FUN!
Kathy Mikuska, MGC Monarch Club Project Coordinator