

Milkweed Soup

Ho-Chunk people celebrate the foraging season for common milkweed flower buds, known as “Mahic” in the Ho-Chunk language. The mahic is cooked up into a delicious brothy soup with other vegetables and tiny dumplings!

Prep the common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*):

Pick milkweed flower buds prior to flowering before they turn pink, usually around mid-late July. Once they turn pink they become bitter. Only take about one fourth of the buds to leave plenty for butterflies. You can use the buds and the tiny top set of leaves. Wash well, then soak in salted water for at least half an hour, rinse, and drain. Milkweed can be frozen for use later in the year.



The large flower bud on the left with the pink blush is just past prime, but the others in the picture look perfect for soup!

Prepare the soup:

Use equal parts of water or broth and milkweed flower buds. You can add other vegetables (green beans, corn, carrots) or ham/bacon. Bring broth to a boil and add milkweed or other veggies. Simmer for 30-40 minutes until milkweed and veggies are tender.

Dumplings:

Dumplings or gnocchi are a fun addition! Small dumplings can be made with a pinch of water mixed with a pinch of flour and rolled into a small dumpling about the size of a fingernail. Toss individual dumplings into the soup as it simmers and cook 20 minutes until the middle of the dumpling is cooked.