

Country Christmas Idea:

Milkweed Pod Poinsettia Ornaments

At first glance, milkweed plants and poinsettias don't seem to have much in common. If you live in an area where milkweed grows wild, however, you can use the dried milkweed pods to make poinsettia ornaments for your Christmas tree.

Here's how:

1. Collect some dried milkweed pods. In the fall, the milkweed plants have already gone to seed but the dried pods will still be attached to the plant. You will need six "halves" of a milkweed pod for each poinsettia flower that you are going to make.
2. After you have collected the milkweed pods and have brought them into the house, put them in a warm spot for a few days or a week to dry out more. This is especially important if it has been rainy and damp outside.
3. Glue the milkweed pod halves together side-by-side in a circle so that they look like a flower. A hot glue gun works well for gluing the pods together.
4. Decorate your poinsettia flowers with spray paint and glitter, or, if you don't want to spray paint your poinsettias, just use glue and glitter. Mix and match and experiment with colors.
5. Glue a loop of string, yarn, twine or ribbon to the back of the poinsettia flower. Once the glue is dry, your ornament is ready to hang on the Christmas tree.

You could also give these as gifts — four or six to set, or however many you want to give.