

Common cocklebur

Xanthium strumarium L.

Family: Asteraceae (Composite family)

Life cycle: Annual

Habitat: Crop fields, flood plains, disturbed areas

General description: Erect plant reaching heights of 6 to 7 ft. Stems are rough with dark spots. Leaves are rough, triangular in shape with wavy or toothed margins and long petioles. Inconspicuous flowers produce egg-shaped burs with two beaks at end. Seedling has long, fleshy cotyledons.

Key ID traits: Rough stems with dark spots, triangular leaves with irregular margins.

Similar species: Sunflower seedlings may resemble those of cocklebur, but sunflower has small, ovate cotyledons.

Miscellaneous: Each bur contains two seeds, one possessing a deeper dormancy than the other.



Lanceolate cotyledons up to 2" long



Spots on cocklebur stem