Horsenettle  
*Solanum carolinense* L.

**Family:** Solanaceae (Nightshade family)

**Life cycle:** Perennial, reproducing by seed, rhizomes and adventitious buds on roots.

**Habitat:** Crop fields, pastures

**General description:** Erect, branched plant reaching heights of 2 to 3 ft. Stems have sharp spines. Leaves are egg shaped with wavy margins or 2 to 5 shallow lobes; sharp spines on bottom of leaf midrib. Flowers occur in clusters, five fused white to violet petals with a cone of bright yellow stamens. Fruit are smooth yellow berries (1/2 in diameter).

**Key ID traits:** Spines on stems and underside of leaf midribs.

**Similar species:** The general growth habit is similar to the groundcherries, but the spines on horsenettle make identification easy.

**Miscellaneous:** Like most members of the Solanaceae family, all plant parts contain toxic alkaloids. Toxicity of berries decrease as they mature.