

Velvetleaf *Abutilon theophrasti*

Family: Malvaceae (mallow family)

Life cycle: Annual

Habitat: Crop fields

General description: Reaches heights of 5-6 ft in soybean, in corn can be as tall as the corn. Heart-shaped leaves may reach lengths of 10 inches. Produces yellow flowers that mature into distinctive seed capsules approximately an inch in diameter.

Key ID traits: The heart shaped leaves and stems are covered with short, dense soft hairs giving it a velvety feel.

Similar species: Venice mallow has similar cotyledons as velvetleaf, although those of Venice mallow are typically rounder and shinier than velvetleaf's. Venice mallow has 3-5 lobed leaves, but the first true leaf may appear entire when it first emerges.

Miscellaneous: Native to China and India. Velvetleaf is often called elephant ears (leaf shape) or butter print (seed capsules). Was used as a fiber crop in China as early as 2000 BC and was introduced to North America in the 1600's for same purpose.

