



COCKLEBUR

Cocklebur (*Xanthium spinosum*) is an annual plant native to the Americas and Eurasia. A member of the Aster family, it grows 2'-4' tall with toothed or lobed white-veined leaves 1" to 3" long. White male and female flowers occur on the same plant. It produces two large seeds within each bur: a "top" seed along the curved side of the bur, and a "bottom" seed along the inner flat surface. The bottom seed germinates within a year while the top seed can sit in the soil for decades before germination. This allows the cocklebur to survive bad years.

It is found in fringe habitats and farm areas where the burs (fruits) can hitch a ride on passing animals. The seeds and seedlings are poisonous if consumed. Moreover, seedlings exude toxic chemicals that inhibit germination of other species of plants, or kill off their seedlings.