

## Rough cocklebur

### *Xanthium strumarium*

#### Description

Considered a nuisance to livestock producers. This plant can reduce the value of wool if burs are entangled and is considered poisonous to all livestock. This species is listed under <https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/plant-pest/plant-health-certification-and-export/seed> as a restricted noxious weed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

#### Habit

Coarse, erect, branching, annual herb that reproduces solely by seed.

#### Leaves

First true leaves are opposite, subsequent leaves are alternate. Triangular to ovate, covered with stiff hairs, 2-6 inches long with irregular lobes and leaf margins with inconspicuous teeth.

#### Stems

Erect, reaching heights of 30-150 cm tall, tough,





covered with dark streaks or spots and short hairs.

### **Flowers**

Inconspicuous, greenish in color, arising between the leaf petioles and the stems and at the ends of the erect stems.

### **Fruits and Seeds**

Elliptic to egg-shaped two-chambered bur, 0.5-1.5 inches long and covered with hooked prickles. Each contain 2 seeds and 2 hooks project from the tip of the bur that are longer and winder than the others.

### **Habitat**

Native to North America. Can be found in roadsides, railways, small streams, and riverbanks.

### **Reproduction**

Reproduces only by seed.

### **Similar**

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Hand-pulling or hoeing is effective for small populations prior to flowering. Prescribed burning has been shown to be effective in destroying seed bank. Can be controlled using a wide variety of soil- and foliar- applied herbicides such as 2,4-D amine, Dicamba, Bromoxynil and selective weed oils.

### **Credits**

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