

Tropical soda apple

Solanum viarum

Description

Currently a federally listed noxious weed in the United States.

Habit

Erect perennial growing 50-150 cm. high.

Leaves

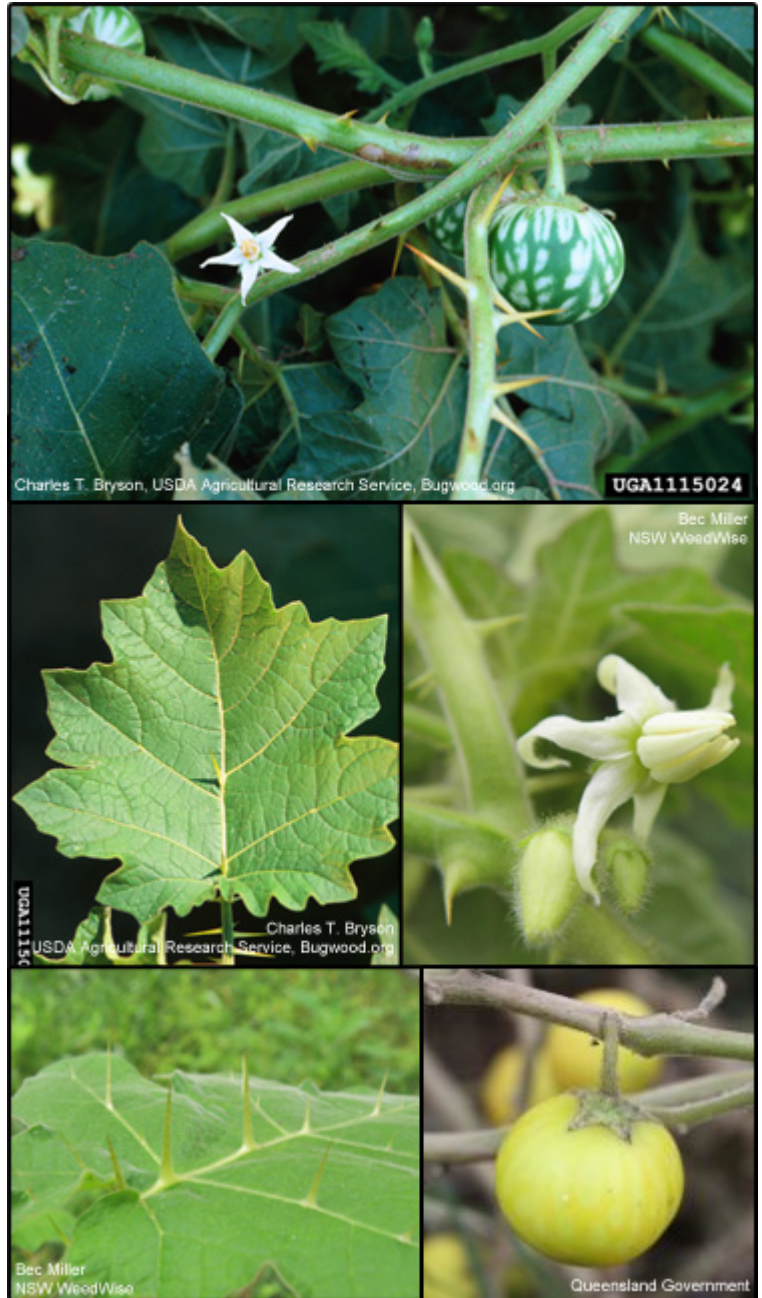
Broadly ovate, up to 20 cm. long and 15 cm. wide, bluntly lobed, undulate edges; dark green in color, glossy above, duller below.

Stems

Shortly pubescent with recurved prickles up to 5mm. long.

Flowers

White in color, 1.5 cm. across, borne in clusters of 1-5 pedicels about 1 cm. long; distal flowers most often male. 3-5 mm. long sepals, white



corolla, narrow with reflexed petals, pale yellow

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Fruits and Seeds

Globose berry, mottled green when young, turning yellow when mature. 2-3 cm. across, contains up to 400 brown, flattened, discoid seeds, 2-3 mm. in diameter.

Habitat

Native to Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina. Can be found in pastures, citrus plantations, sugarcane and vegetable fields, turf fields and roadsides.

Reproduction

By seed and by shoots from its extensive root system. Capable of producing 40,000-50,000 seeds per plant.

Similar

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Possession, movement and release is prohibited in the United States. This plant is difficult to control but small populations and individual plants can be hand pulled and burned. Roots must be completely removed due to regrowth. Larger populations require repeat mowing and/or applications of herbicides/bioherbicides. The use of *Gratiana boliviana* as biological control has been shown to be effective with small infestations.

Credits

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