

BUFFALOBUR

Solanum rostratum



- ✦ Other names: Buffalobur Nightshade, Buffalo Burr, Colorado Bur, Kansas Thistle, Mexican thistle, Texas Thistle
- ✦ Buffalobur is a Class C Noxious weed.
- ✦ It is an annual and a member of the nightshade genus in the Solanaceae Family and reproduces by seed.
- ✦ Buffalobur is a fibrous rooted annual with upright, heavy, branching stems. Plants grow up to 2 feet tall and are covered with straight yellow spines that are up to ½ inch long. Leaves are deeply lobed, alternate and prickly: leaves of older plants are up to 5 inches long. Its star shaped, yellow flowers bloom from midsummer till frost and are about one inch across and have 5 petals. The spiny fruit, or bur, develops while being enclosed by a rough, prickly calyx which surrounds the berry as it ripens. Seeds are black, flat and wrinkled.
- ✦ Its many sharp spines can cause intense, lingering pain if touched.

Animals are also affected and even after the burs are removed, dogs will continue to lick and chew on their feet because of the pain.

- ✦ The leaves and fruit contain the poisonous steroid alkaloid, *solanine* as well as other *tropane alkaloids*. Poisoning is primarily shown by gastrointestinal and neurological disorders.
- ✦ The plants can also accumulate toxic levels of nitrates from the soil. Hogs have been poisoned by eating Buffalobur foliage or roots. The burs become tangled in sheep wool, decreasing wool value.
- ✦ Buffalobur is the major native host plant of the Colorado potato beetle. It competes with forage and other crop plants for moisture. Buffalobur is found in meadows, dry rangeland, pastures, lawns, cultivated fields, roadsides and waste areas. Despite its imposing looks and toxic properties, it is not very competitive and survives only in disturbed, dry areas.



CONTROL OPTIONS



- ✦ For small infestations digging, hoeing, or hand pulling before flowers appear is effective. Repeated close mowing of Buffalobur can prevent seed production. As an annual weed, management tactics that prevent flowering and seed set can be effective at controlling and eventually eradicating Buffalobur when the soil seed bank is exhausted.
- ✦ At the rosette stage 2, 4 D; *Dicamba* (used in Weedmaster) has been shown to be effective in controlling Buffalobur. Also,
- ✦ Spot spraying with an herbicide containing the active ingredient *glyphosate* (Roundup Pro, Glyphos, etc.) may be used effectively while the plant is actively growing, prior to seed production. Spray each plant thoroughly on the stems and leaves, enough to be wet but not dripping. Be aware, *glyphosate* is non-selective and will injure any plants that it comes in contact with, including grass.
- ✦ When using herbicides, read and follow all label instructions and obey all label precautions. (Note: pesticide product registration is renewed annually and product names and formulations may vary from year to year.)

