

Buffalobur

Like the best of villains, Buffalobur is deceptively attractive. It has cheery yellow flowers and ornately-lobed dark green leaves. But if you look a little bit closer, Buffalobur's innately evil nature becomes apparent. Long, sharp thorns cover the stems and surround the flowers and even line the veins of the attractive leaves. Its yellow flowers are followed by wickedly spiny burrs that can become scattered about and are quite painful to step on. The stout spines are not merely sharp, these spines are also covered with a substance that can cause intense, lingering pain in anyone stabbed by them.

Buffalobur is not a well-behaved plant, instead it is a highly invasive, noxious weed. It thrives in the abused soil of overgrazed pastures, where it can poison cattle and render a pasture unusable unless control measures are taken. The prickles on this highly toxic plant help to discourage grazing by livestock. Buffalobur contains the steroidal glycoalkaloids that causes gastrointestinal effects, neurological problems, death and possibly birth defects. Cattle are most susceptible but other livestock are likely to be affected and it is toxic to humans.



It is an annual with long, yellow spines on stems, leaves, and flower heads and can grow up to 2 feet high. Drought resistant, its highest occurrence is in dry, exposed soil. The oblong leaves are 2-3 inches long with deep rounded lobes and are covered with very dense, stiff, and sharp spines. Bright yellow flowers can be seen in summer. In the fall, burrs up to 3/8 inch in diameter are enclosed in the dried flower parts and are filled with black, wrinkled, flat pitted seeds.

Herbicides should be applied between late bud to early flower, but can be difficult to control. Chopping and burning during early flower can be an effective control.

Johnson County Weed & Pest Control District
(307) 684 - 5715