

Solanum viarum

tropical soda apple



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Appearance: Bushy, prickly herbaceous perennial, to 2 m (6 ft) tall, more commonly 1 m (3 ft) tall; stems armed with broad-based, straight or downward-pointing prickles.

Leaves: Alternate, simple, clearly petioled (these also prickly); blades oval-triangular, nearly as broad as long, to 20 cm (8 in) long and 15 cm (6 in) wide, angular-lobed; surfaces dense with fine soft hairs giving blades a velvety sheen (hairs a mix of types as on stems); veins prickly.

Flowers: White, in small terminal clusters; 5 petals white, recurved; stamens with prominent cream-colored anthers.

Fruit: A globose berry, 2–3 cm (0.8–1.2 in) wide, green with dark veining, like a tiny watermelon, when immature; dull medium yellow when ripe; seeds about 400 per berry.

Ecological threat:

Outcompetes native plants, crowding or shading them out. Becoming a major concern of agriculture and a serious threat to Florida natural areas. FLEPPC Category I



Distribution: NW, NE, C, SW, SE

Field Notations

SOLAVIAR/SOVI2

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu>