



Solanum viarum

TOMATO FAMILY

Solanaceae

COMMON NAMES

English: tropical soda apple

Vietnam: cà trái vàng

DESCRIPTION

Evergreen, erect herb [50–150 (–200) cm tall], with densely hairy stems and branches with recurved (2–5 mm long) and straight spines (up to 20 mm long) on the leaf stalks and the leaf veins.

Leaves: Dark green, glossy above, duller below, hairy, simple, broadly egg-shaped [6–20 cm long and 6–15 cm wide], bluntly lobed, with spines on the veins and hairs on both sides, leaf stalks are 3–7 cm long with prickles.

Flowers: White (1.5 cm across), in clusters of 1–5.

Fruits: Berries (fleshy fruits that don't open at maturity), mottled light and dark green becoming pale yellow as they mature, smooth (2–3 cm across), containing 400 brown seeds (2–3 mm in diameter).

ORIGIN

Argentina, southern Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

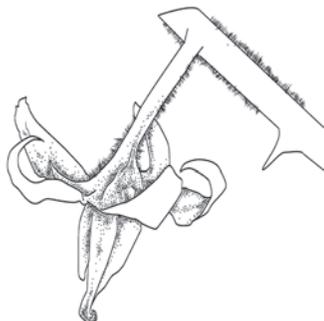
Medicine and accidentally as a contaminant.

INVADES

Grassland, forest edges/gaps and riparian vegetation.

IMPACTS

Dense stands displace other plant species by crowding or shading them out. The prickles on the plants reduce wildlife forage and prevent movement of animals through invaded areas (USDA-FS, 2005). The foliage and stems are unpalatable to cattle, considerably reducing livestock-carrying capacities (Medal *et al.*, 2012). Control costs of *S. viarum* to ranchers in Florida were estimated at US\$ 6.5–16 million per year (Thomas, 2007). It has also caused poisoning of goats in Florida (Porter *et al.*, 2003). It is an alternative host for many plant diseases including the cucumber mosaic virus, gemini virus, potato leafroll virus, potato virus Y, tobacco etch virus, tomato mosaic virus, tomato mottle virus and the fungal pathogen, *Alternaria solani* (Cooke, 1997). It is also a host for a number of insect pests (Sudbrink *et al.*, 2000; Medal *et al.*, 2012).



Solanum viarum Dunal



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