

September 2012 *Guess that Plant*



Sicyos angulatus L. Bur-Cucumber

The September *Guess that Plant* was one of New Jersey's widespread annual vines. Bur-cucumber is found throughout New Jersey outside of the Pine Barrens with its greatest distribution within the Delaware River valley. Bur-cucumber is found on rich floodplains and stream-side forests. It is a climbing species that has small white flowers that mature into a cluster of burr cover indehiscent fruits with seeds that are covered with barbed prickly bristles, ideal for transport by large mammals.

The plant may look like a grape from a distance yet its flesh stem without woody pith and its barbed and prickle covered 5-angled leaves makes the identification less likely to be *Vitis* or any other woody vine. Watch for this plant to be a visible part of the flora once mid summer's heat gives this plant a boost. As with all annuals, it disappears after the first frost.

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