

Toxicity.—Black cherry contains the cyanogenetic glucoside, amygdalin, which, upon being hydrolyzed by enzymes in the plant, yields hydrocyanic acid. Poisoning frequently occurs from eating the young shoots or broken or discarded branches. The leaves, bark and stones of the fruit contain the glucoside. Young leaves are considered more toxic than mature ones. (See discussion under sorghum.)

Johnson Grass

Description.—Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense* (L.) Pers.) is a coarse, weedy perennial grass, 2 to 5 feet tall, with rough scaly rhizomes or underground stems extending in all directions. The flowering stems are erect, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter, light green and often marked with dark red or brown diseased spots. The leaves are long and narrow, usually less than 1 inch wide and with a prominent, pale midrib. The flower cluster or panicle is terminal at the top of the stem, 6 to 20 inches long and bears numerous flowers and seeds. Each flower or spikelet is narrowly ovate, nearly erect, slightly hairy or silky and furnished with a hair-like awn about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long which is bent below the middle to form a blunt angle. (Fig. 25.)

Habitat and Distribution.—Johnson grass is found in open ground, cultivated fields, roadsides, around barns and farm yards and in waste areas around rubbish piles. It occurs nearly all over the state, but is most common in cultivated areas.

Toxicity.—Johnson grass is a cyanogenetic plant. It contains a glucoside which yields hydrocyanic acid on hydrolysis. See discussion under sorghum.

Oriental Cocklebur, Clotbur, Cocklebur

Description.—Cocklebur (*Xanthium pungens* Wallr.) is a robust annual weed 1 to 4 feet tall with stout stems and spreading branches. The leaves are alternate, long-stalked and simple; the leaf-blades, 2 to 10 inches long, are nearly heart-shaped or triangular, with toothed and sometimes lobed margins. The whole plant feels rough to the touch and the stems are often spotted with small dull red patches. Although the flowers are greenish and inconspicuous, the fruits are very prominent. These pods, about 1 inch or less long, are oblong, green or brown, covered with hooked prickles, and bear two longer, hard spines at the end. Each bur contains two seeds, one of which germinates