

Stinging nettle

Urtica dioica L.

Life cycle

Erect, rhizomatous perennial.

Leaves

Opposite, egg- to lance-shaped with a rounded base and pointed tip. Petiolated leaves have coarsely toothed margins, smooth surfaces to a few hairs beneath



Stinging nettle seedling.

and long, stinging hairs on the lower surface. Contact with stinging hairs can cause a skin irritation.

Stems

Four-angled, herbaceous stems are usually erect and unbranched, up to 6 feet tall and covered with stinging hairs. Contact with stinging hairs can cause a skin irritation.

Flowers and fruit

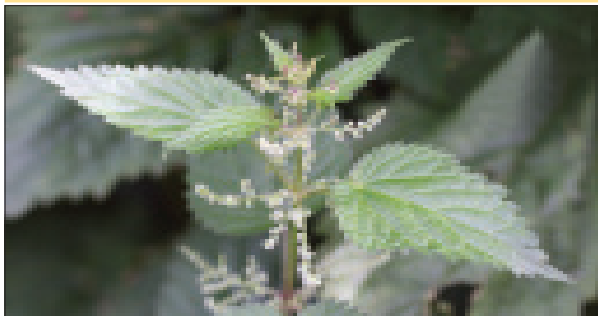
Inconspicuous, green to yellow flowers are formed in clusters in the upper leaf axils. The seed is enclosed in a single-seeded, tan, egg-shaped fruit.

Reproduction

Seeds and rhizomes that form extensive colonies.



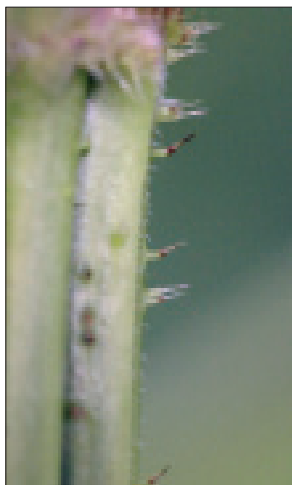
Stinging nettle *continued*



Stinging nettle foliage and flower clusters.



Stinging nettle stem.



Close-up of stinging hairs on stem of stinging nettle.

Urticaceae (Nettle family)