

Ageratina adenophera

Common name:

Crofton weed.

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate, but not at flowering.

Toxicity to Goats:

Low risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Cattle, sheep and horses.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Pyrrolizidine alkaloids,
- . Compound tremol, Saponin, Tremetol.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Chronic weight loss,
- . Sometimes acute jaundice, with or without photosensitization,
- . Coughing, rapid heaving respiration,
- . Sometimes death, with no other symptoms.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Causes acute oedema of the lungs, followed by haemorrhage.
- . Chronic ingestion may lead to liver damage, and reduced long term productivity.
- . Chronically damaged livers in some ruminants may accumulate excessive copper, which may be released, and kill the animal.

Treatment;

- . Antihistamines, antibiotics and corticosteroids may help.
- . Many horses are left permanently useless.
- . Note: in Qld – Tallebudgera Horse Disease.
in NSW – Numinbah Horse Sickness.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Goats can tolerate many months of grazing crofton weed, and can eventually eradicate it, but other alternate fodder must be available.
- . Crowns must be removed.
- . Slash to prevent flowering and seed set.
- . Use glyphosates.
- . A declared “Noxious” weed in many areas.
- . Try Grazon®, Starane® or Tordon®.

Comments:

- . An erect, branched, perennial plant, found in eastern NSW and southern Queensland, related to mistflower and creeping crofton weed.
- . Has a short, pale yellow rootstock, which has a carrot-like odour when broken.
- . Leaves are opposite, triangular, bright green, and rather hairy, the edges are lobed.
- . Flowers are small, white and in clusters, at the ends of branches, flowering in spring.
- . There are numerous stems and branches, up to 2 metres high, growing from a large well-rooted perennial crown.
- . The tall stems become woody with age, then collapse, and take root where they touch the ground.
- . Cattle tend not to eat this plant, but sheep will eat small amounts.
- . Horses have a preference for crofton weed, and are very vulnerable to poisoning. The slashed plant is still attractive to horses.
- . Grows in disturbed, moist sites on fertile soils.
- . Found on central and north coasts of NSW, southern Queensland and in South Australia, and occasionally in the Perth area.
- . A native of Central America.



Picture: *Ageratina adenophera*
Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW

Further Reading.

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- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992.
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- . Parsons and Cuthbertson.
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