

## *Amarynthus mitchellii*

### *A. macrocarpus*

#### **Common name:**

Boggabri.

#### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Moderate.

#### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

#### **Toxicity to Other Species:**

Toxic to sheep, cattle, horses, donkeys and pigs.

#### **Poisonous Principle:**

- . Nitrates,
- . Oxalates,
- . Unknown other substances.

#### **Effects:**

##### *Signs and symptoms;*

- . Nitrate poisoning causes respiratory distress, darkening of the gums and rapid death.
- . Acute oxalate poisoning causes muscle tremors, staggering gait, collapse and rapid death.

##### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Chronic kidney disease with associated ill-thrift is possible when large amounts of these plants are eaten over long periods.
- . Alternatively, kidney failure can sometimes develop for a different reason, and in as short a time as 7 – 14 days, when large amounts of this plant are eaten.

##### *Treatment;*

- . See Vet.
- . Try large doses of Vitamin C and dolomite.

#### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Be aware of potential stock problems.
- . Use herbicides, but be aware that they may increase palatability, to the detriment of the stock.

#### **Comments:**

- . A semi-erect annual plant growing up to 30 cms high.
- . The stem is stiff and branched, pale green when young, and straw-coloured with age.
- . The leaves are oval, alternate, pale green and oblong, tapered to the stalk.
- . Flowers are inconspicuous, in the leaf axils, giving rise to black seeds.
- . Grows in summer crops, and fallows.
- . Found through Queensland, western slopes and plains of NSW, and into SA.
- . Oxalate accumulating plants can sometimes cause a calcium deficiency state in horses and donkeys called “Big Head”, a nutritional deficiency.
- . Weeds from this genus are often grazed without causing any adverse effects, if eaten as part of a mixed diet. Animals also need to become accustomed to the plant.
- . Frequently found on bare ground, in clay soils, and in open grassland.
- . Occurs in Northern Territory, Queensland, NSW and South Australia.



Picture: *Amarynthus mitchellii*

#### **Further Reading:**

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Harden. Flora of NSW. 2000