

Argemome mexicana
A. ochroleuca

Common name:

Mexican poppy, Golden thistle of Peru,
Prickly poppy, Devil's Fig,

Palatability to Livestock:

Not known to be eaten

Toxicity to Goats:

Low risk toxicity,

Toxicity to Other Species:

Potentially toxic to all animal species, but generally only affects poultry

Poisonous Principle:

- . Isoquinoline alkaloids, notably sanguinarine,
- . Nitrates,

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Weakness,
- . Subcutaneous oedema,
- . May cause glaucoma,

Health and Production Problems;

- . Oedema of the heart and lungs may lead to cardio-respiratory complications and death.

Treatment;

- . See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Prevent seeding, cultivate, and sow to pasture,
- . Hand-pull seedlings,
- . Use selective herbicides, try Group C, I,
- . Plants become more resistant with age,
- . Declared "Noxious" in WA.

Comments:

- . An erect, bluish-green, variegated, thistle-like, annual plant, with a central taproot, growing from a rosette, up to 70cms high,
- . Native to Mexico, now widespread in NSW, and occurs in all mainland states,

- . Upright, branched, prickly, leafy stems, up to a metre high, containing yellow sap,
- . Long, pale, blue-green prickly leaves, clasping the stem, sometimes mottled with white,
- . Single pale yellow to pale orange, stemless flowers, mainly spring to autumn, four cms across,
- . Seeds are small, in a fleshy capsule. Spread by seed.
- . Grows in areas low in nitrogen and phosphorus; contains high levels of nitrate.
- . A weed of crops and wasteland, especially on sandy soils and disturbed ground and roadsides,
- . Not very palatable to animals. All parts of the plant may contain toxins.
- . Ingestion of the seeds poses the greatest risk, but increased ingestion of herbicide treated plants may also lead to problems.
- . Seeds in grain may swab as opiates in racehorses.



Picture: *Argemome mexicana*
Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

Further Reading;

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992
- . Cunningham, Mulham, Milthorpe and Leigh. Plants of Western NSW. 1999.
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- . Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses. 1998.
- . Swarbrick and Skarratt. Bushweed 2 Database. 1994.