

## *Bryophyllum spp*

### **Common name:**

Mother of millions, Christmas bells,

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Only eaten under feeding stress.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

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

Cattle, and other grazing stock.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

Nitrates?

Cardiac glycosides, bufadienolide type, similar to cane toad excretion.

### **Effects:**

#### *Signs and symptoms;*

- . Scouring, depression, lack of appetite,
- . Irregular heart beat, diarrhoea,
- . Difficulty in breathing.
- . PM shows internal haemorrhage and heart muscle degeneration.

#### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Cases of poisoning seem to occur mainly when feed is very dry, and no other green feed is available. (May to October).
- . Some animals recover after a few days, others die.

#### *Treatment;*

- . Try activated charcoal, and glucose and salt, See Vet.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Thoroughly wet with 2,4-D herbicide.
- . Try Amicide® with a wettener.
- . Pull out into disposable bags, or burn off.
- . Spray with neat diesel distillate.

### **Comments:**

- . Garden plant and escapee, 200 + spp.

- . Perennial plant with many stiff, erect, succulent stems; upright succulent forbs.
- . Allelopathic effect from roots inhibit other plant growth, tends to grow in poor soil.
- . Stems are dappled with pink, pale green, and dark green, growing to 90 cms tall.
- . Leaves usually in pairs, along the stem, are thick and waxy. The leaves produce tiny platelets at the edges of the leaves, which drop to the ground and regenerate.
- . Flowers are carried on a long stalk, in a bunch. They are red and green, hanging, tubular and succulent; flowers mid-winter.
- . Five varieties known in Australia.
- . A native of S Africa, now naturalized in parts of SE Queensland and coastal NSW.
- . Found in open forests, waste places, and along roadsides.
- . Mostly ignored by stock, but they sometimes seek it out, esp when flowering or starting to dry off during winter or early spring.



*Bryophyllum spp*

Picture: Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

### **Further Reading:**

- . Covacevich, Davie and Pearn, Toxic Plants and Animals. A Guide for Australia. 1987.
- . Dowling and McKenzie. Poisonous Plants. 1993
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants. 1981
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Scheife and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Qld. 1995
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants. Handbook. 1983.
- . Dowling and McKenzie. Poisonous Plants. 1993.
- . Steginger. Poisonous Plants Home Bush, Garden 2003.
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997

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