

Gomphrena celosiodes

Common name:

Gomphrena, Soft kahki weed, White eye

Palatability to Livestock:

Seldom eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

Not known to be eaten.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to horses when eaten in excess, over extended periods.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Oxalates,
- . Unknown toxins.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Muscle tremors,
- . Depression,
- . Staggering gait, incoordination,
- . Lack of appetite, tucked under,
- . Droopy head, tendency to stand alone,
- . Collapse and rapid death.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Chronic kidney disease, associated with ill-thrift is possible, when large amounts of this weed are eaten over long periods.

Treatment;

Be aware of potential stock problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Fertilise and sow to good pasture.
- . Spell pastures to encourage more desirable spp
- . Control achieved by grazing management.

Comments:

- . Short lived perennial plant, with hairy, often reddish, prostrate, branched stems, and a strong taproot.
- . Leaves are opposite, dull green above and grayish underneath.

. Flowers are thumb-nail sized, globular, white to pale pink, at the ends of the branches.

. Flowering is in the warmer months.

. Native to S America, but now naturalized in Queensland and northern NSW, mainly in the coastal areas.

. Similar to *Alternanthera spp.*, but flowers are at the end of stems.

. Horses only are affected, and always under conditions when they have been forced to eat the plant for lack of alternate fodder.

. Some horses recover, others exhibit “anxious” symptoms, for some time.



Picture: *Gomphrena celosiodes*
Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW.

Further Reading:

- . Cunningham, Mulham, Milthorpe and Leigh. Plants of Western NSW. 1999.
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Scheffe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995.
- . Dowling and McKenzie. Poisonous Plants. 1993.
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000.