

Hypochoeris radicata

Common name:

Cat's ear, Flat weed,

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate, at flowering.

Toxicity to Goats:

Nil.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Horses, especially draught horses.

Poisonous Principle:

Unknown.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Involuntary movement of one or more limbs.
- . Knuckling over of fetlocks (Stringhalt), and muscle atrophy.
- . Laryngeal dysfunction.

Health and Production Problems:

- . Suspected of causing "Stringhalt disease"
Involuntary puppet-like motion when forced to move.
- . Recovery may take from a few days to a few month.,

Treatment;

- . Try thiamine, Vitamin B1.
- . Remove from infested pasture.
- . See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Try goats, before and during flowering.
- . Use glyphosates at the fully developed rosette stage.

Comments:

- . A perennial weed, growing flat on the ground, with hairy leaves, may be annual or perennial.
- . Growing from a rosette of notched leaves, and has a long taproot.

- . Flowers are on long branched stalks.
- . Perennial cat's ear has several flowers on a tall branching stem, from a rosette of dark green toothed leaves (whereas dandelion has only one flower per stem).
- . May flower at any time of year.
- . After flowering, fluffy seed heads develop.
- . Summer and autumn growth period is the main growth time.



Picture: *Hypochoeris radicata*
Helen Simmonds. Calga. NSW.

Further Reading:

- . Blood. Environmental Weeds for SE Australia. CRC Weed Management Systems. 2003.
- . Dowling and McKenzie. Poisonous Plants. 1993.
- . Lamp and Collett. Field Guide to Weeds in Australia. 1997.
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants Handbook. 1983.
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000.