

Parthenium hysterophorus

Common name:

Parthenium weed,

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate at all stages.

Toxicity to Goats:

Not proven to be toxic.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Horses, cattle, and humans.

Poisonous Principle:

Sesquiterpenes lactones, and
Phenolic derivatives.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Dermatitis and respiratory reactions in humans.
- . Allergic skin reactions in horses.
- . Cattle may be affected, and pass the toxic principle on in their milk.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Reduces productive capacity of grazing land.
- . Overgrazing encourages the weed, which must be monitored once found.

Treatment;

See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Eaten by goats.
- . Goat growers in NSW report successful results.
- . Quarantine the area.
- . Spray repeatedly with herbicide. Metsulfuron®, Picloram®, Dicamba®.
- . Thoroughly wet all foliage.
- . Declared “Noxious” in all states of Australia.

Comments:

- . An upright annual plant, developing from a basal rosette into a plant over a metre tall, which becomes woody with age.
- . The long leaves are deeply lobed, and covered with fine soft hairs.
- . Small flowers are creamy-white and dainty, with five distinct corners, forming part of an open many-branched flower cluster.
- . Seeds are black, two mm long with two very small white spoon-shaped appendages.
- . Seedlings normally appear in the warmer months.
- . Reduces productive capacity of grazing land.
- . Causes skin and respiratory reactions in humans.
- . An allelopathic plant, exuding growth-inhibiting hormones from the roots, which lowers the germination chances of more desirable species.



Picture: *Parthenium hysterophorus* NSW DPI

Further Reading:

- . AGDEX 647.
- . Cherry. Fact Sheet. Central Northern CC. 1997.
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Sclafe and Silcock. Weeds of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995
- . Landcare Note. Victoria.
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds in Australia. 2001