

## *Psoralea spp*

### **Common name:**

Emu-foot, Psoralea,

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Moderate.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

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

Sheep.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

Forms fibre balls in the stomach.

### **Effects:**

*Signs and symptoms;*

- . Bowel blockage,
- . Chronic scouring in cattle.

*Health and Production Problems;*

- . Ill thrift in cattle and sheep.

*Treatment;*

- . Provide sufficient fibre in rich herbage country.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Be aware of potential livestock problems.

### **Comments:**

- . Leaves bind together in the rumen forming fibre balls, some of these can pass into the abomasum, (4<sup>th</sup> stomach), and may lodge in the intestines, blocking the bowel.
- . An erect, spreading, perennial growing up to a metre high, with a variable growth habit. Depending on seasonal conditions, it can form a sprawling shrub.
- . The dark green leaves have three to five leaflets growing in a spiral, on stalks.
- . Small pea-shaped blueish/pink flowers, arranged in spikes, on stalks longer than the leaves.

- . Each flower sets a single round black seed, in a small egg shaped pod.
- . The pod is oval, black, about 3 mm long.
- . *P pinnat*, Taylorina, ( WA), - Blue butterfly bush (Tasmania).
- . Evergreen large shrub, erect, with many branches, 1.5 – 5m tall, a native of S Africa.
- . Found, dry coastal areas, swamps, woodland, roadsides, a very durable plant.
- . Leaves, soft pliable, crowded, finely divided like pine needles, channeled above with bristles and glands.
- . Flowers 15mm long, pea shaped, single or in clusters at end of stems, white with purplish to blue markings, in summer, but may have a second flowering.
- . Pods, elliptical, 3-4mm long, wrinkled, with one seed, spread by birds.
- . Seeds long lived, germinating esp after fire,
- . Resprouts from cut stumps.
- . Can be mistaken for young *pinus spp* when not in flower.



Picture: *Psoralea spp* weeds.org.au

### **Further Reading:**

- . Blood. Environmental Weeds for SE Australia. CRC Weed Management Systems. 2003.
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants, Handbook. 1983.
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Scheffe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Qld 1995