

## *Trachymene spp*

### **Common name:**

White / Blue parsnip,

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Low.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Moderate.

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

Sheep.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

Unknown, toxin transfer through placenta and milk.

### **Effects:**

*Signs and symptoms;*

- . Irregular epiphyseal plates, (at long bones),
- . Deviation of carpal joints,
- . Staggering, diarrhoea, cyanosis.

*Health and Production Problems;*

- . "Bent-Leg" of lambs.
- . Do not allow pregnant ewes access to this plant.
- . Do not drive young lambs fast if they have had access to this plant.

*Treatment;*

- . Some lambs recover.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Be aware of potential health problems.

### **Comments:**

- . White parsnip, *T. ochracea* is an upright annual or biennial forb, 60cms tall.
- . Most leaves are 4-5cm across and grow from a basal rosette.
- . Leaves are divided into 3-5 main lobes with toothed margins, or smaller minor lobes.
- . Flowers are white, and grouped into clusters one cm across, on long branched stalks.
- . Colonies grow in sandy infertile soil, in rocky outcrops and coastal heaths.

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. Blue parsnip. *T. cyanantha* is a prostrate or slightly upright, annual or biennial forb to 45 cm tall.

. Leaves are deeply lobed, and 5-7 cm long.

. Flowers are pale to deep blue, and form clusters one to two cm wide.

. Both plants grow best during cooler months, and flower in spring.

. Large numbers of wild parsnip can occur in overgrazed areas during years of late summer or autumn rain.

. Eaten when little other feed is available, and is most poisonous when fruiting or flowering in spring.

. There are two different effects on sheep:

. If driven fast after eating the plant, young sheep may stagger and die suddenly.

. Other signs include diarrhoea, paleness and blueness in the skin.

. On post mortem, fluid in chest cavity.

. Lambs with malformed legs, mainly fore legs (bent leg) may be born to ewes that graze wild parsnip in spring.

. Pregnant ewes should be denied access when the plant is in flower or seed.

. There is no treatment for affected animals.

. Ewes on pastures that have produced bent leg lambs may become infertile.

. Occurs SE Queensland, and NE of NSW.



Picture: *Trachymene spp*

### **Further Reading:**

- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Sclafe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Qld. 1995
- . Dowling and McKenzie, Poisonous Plants. 1993.
- . McKenzie. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology 2000.