

Urtica incisa

Urtica urens

Common name:

Stinging nettle, Scrub nettle,

Palatability to Livestock:

More palatable after frosts.

Toxicity to Goats:

No.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Dogs and cats, and humans.

Poisonous Principle:

Combination of acetylcholine, histamine and a third factor, which must be injected into the skin.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

. Blistering rash on skin – humans, cats and dogs.

Health and Production Problems;

. Sudden muscular activity.

Treatment;

See Doctor or Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

. Spot spray with herbicide.

Comments:

- . *U. urens*, an annual, *U. incisa*, a perennial.
- . An erect coarsely toothed herb, oval or long opposite, pointed leaves, dark green above, paler below, usually hairless, on short square, mint like stalks.
- . Stems and leaves are bristly. Leaves shorter than the stalks.
- . The annual species has drooping catkins of green flowers hanging from leaf axils, male and female flowers in the same bunch, summer flowering, but often all year.

. The perennial species has male and female flowers on different plants.

. Both species occur throughout Australia, usually found in high nutrient soils, chicken pens, stock yards etc.

. Stems and leaves are covered with short stinging hairs; all species sting, even the dried plant.

. Hairs are irritant and allergenic, pollen causes hay fever.



Picture: florabase.calm.wa.gov.au



Pictures: *Urtica spp*

Further Reading:

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992.
- . Cribb and Cribb. Wild Medicine in Australia. 1990.
- . McBarron. Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons in NSW. 1976.
- . Roth. Weeds, Friend or Foe. 2001
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.