

## ***Brunfelsia spp***

### **Common name:**

Yesterday Today and Tomorrow.  
Franciscia.

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Eaten occasionally.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

None reported.

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

Dogs are attracted to the berries, but are poisoned by them, also cattle and humans.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

. Probably manicine and manacein, and / or gelsemic acid. Solanine-type alkaloids.

### **Effects:**

#### *Signs and symptoms;*

- . Salivation, vomiting, enteritis.
- . Excessive urination.
- . Depression.
- . Incoordination of movement, leading to tremors, convulsions and tetanic spasms.
- . Dogs exhibit symptoms similar to snail bait (metaldehyde) or strychnine poisoning after chewing the plant or seeds.

#### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Post mortem examinations showed only gastro intestinal lesions.

#### *Treatment;*

- . None known. Induce vomiting.
- . Try absorbent charcoal. See Vet.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . A garden plant,
- . Do not feed to any livestock,

### **Comments:**

. A shrub about two metres high, with many branches and dense foliage; some species are deciduous.

- . Leaves are flat, green and oval.
- . Flowers are five lobed and bright blue when they first open, changing to almost white as they age.
- . Some species are perfumed, others have fowl smell.
- . Berries produced in summer are green, changing to brown, then almost black.
- . Native to tropical America.
- . Found as an ornamental shrub in tropical and temperate parts of Australia.
- . Two spp of this plant are used for making hallucinogenic drinks. The active principles have not been identified. These species are not known to be in Australia.
- . *B. pauciflora* and *B. brasiliensis* rarely set fruit in the Sydney region, and are not likely to cause problems to dogs.
- . Affected dogs become unbalanced on their feet. Collapse and convulsions may occur, with paddling of the feet and the head bent right back, finally the seizure passes.
- . This may re occur, especially after a fright.
- . Death can occur within 10 hours.
- . Dogs regularly seek green roughage.
- . Toxins interfere with the motor centre of the brain and spine, and cause lassitude, greenish stools and kidney failure.
- . Do not allow children to eat these berries.



Picture: *Brunfelsia spp* Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW

### **Further Reading:**

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants. 1981
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants. Handbook. 1983
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.