**Buxus spp**

**Common name:**
Box hedge, Boxwood,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Not known to be eaten.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to horses, sheep, cattle, pigs and camels, and humans, also domestic pets.

**Poisonous Principle:**
. Unknown alkaloids.
. Buxine and tannic acids.

**Effects:**
*Sighs and Symptoms;*
. Severe gastro-enteritis.
. Diarrhoea.
. Respiratory failure.

*Health and Production Problems;*
. Affected animals may die.

*Treatment;*
Be aware of potential health problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. **Garden plant.**
. Place clippings into disposable bags.
. Do not feed these garden clippings to livestock.
. The sap can cause irritation and itching.

**Comments:**
. A genus of evergreen shrubs and trees, with square stems, grown for their foliage and habit.
. It is slow growing and long lived; frost hardy, but requires sun, or only semi-shade, growing to 2-6metres high.

. Leaves are small, oblong, opposite, glossy and dark green or variegated, smooth, thick and leathery. New growth is golden in the spring.
. Leaves are toxic to animals and humans.
. The flowers are insignificant, tiny and pale green, male and female together in leaf axils, appearing in springtime.
. Fruit is an oblong capsule with black seeds.
. Used as a dwarf edging plant for gardens, or as pot specimens. Vigorous roots, similar to privet.
. These plants are often clipped into unusual shapes.
. All parts are toxic, even the wood.

Picture: *Buxus spp*  
Helen Simmonds. Calga, NSW.

**Further Reading:**
. Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004
. Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997

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