Cestrum spp

Common name:  
Green / Orange cestrum,  
Lady of the night, Green poisonberry,

Palatability to Livestock:  
Seldom eaten unless the animal is hungry.

Toxicity to Livestock:  
High risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:  
Toxic to all livestock and humans.

Poisonous Principle:  
Possibly a carboxyatractylocide and solasonine.

Effects:  
Signs and symptoms:  
. Depression, Abdominal pain,  
. Irritability, weakness, then recumbency.  
. In humans, Hallucination, high temperature.  
. Bowel haemorrhage.

Health and Production Problems:  
. Causes acute liver necrosis and death, within three days.

Treatment:  
. See Vet or Doctor, treatment for solanine poisoning may be attempted.

Integrated Control Strategy:  
. Cut stump, and treat with herbicide.  
. The root system must be destroyed. Leave for six months for the herbicide to translocate.  
. Try glyphosates or metsulfuron methyl.  
. Fence off the area, since dead leaves and branches are still toxic. Incinerate remains.  
. Declared “Noxious” in Victoria, and in parts of NSW and Queensland.

Comments:  
. Garden escapee, do not feed to stock.  
. All parts of the plant, especially the berries are poisonous, also toxic to children.  
. Toxicity levels may be variable.  
. Commonly involved in plant poisonings, especially in coastal NSW, when feed is scarce.

. A perennial shrub growing up to 3 metres high  
. Stems are erect and woody, roots are yellow.  
. Leaves are alternate, shiny and dark green, pointed at both ends, and have a foul smell if crushed.  
. Flowers are yellow, orange, or red, and trumpet-shaped, from 2 – 12 cms long, growing in clusters, from spring to autumn.  
. They have a fragrant perfume at night, which can cause respiratory problems, headache and nausea.  
. Berries are oval and glossy green, turning black when ripe, and will stain the skin if crushed. Some varieties are white.  
. The plant reproduces by seed and rhizomes.  
. A native of Chilli, found from coastal Queensland, coastal NSW to Victoria.  
. Most cases of poisoning are in cattle eating it when under hunger stress in winter/spring.

Picture: Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW. Red cestrum

Picture: wikipedia Yellow cestrum

References:  
. Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997

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