

Gastrolobium grandiflorum

Common name:

Desert poison bush, Heart-leaf poison, Wallflower poison,

Palatability to Livestock:

Seldom eaten, although some individual plants are readily eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

High risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to cattle, sheep, horses, donkeys and camels, – and to dogs as scavengers.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Fluroacetates, (1080 poison).
- . All parts are toxic, highest at flowering.
- . Blocks the citric acid cycle.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Accelerated, weak, arrhythmic heart beat,
- . Rapid noisy panting, respiratory distress,
- . Staggering then falling,
- . Bleeding from the mouth.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Death within minutes, to hours.
- . Occasionally a recovery.
- . Flowers and seeds are highly toxic.
- . Suckers are very poisonous.
- . Leaves are less palatable, and less toxic.

Treatment;

See Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Grubb out and burn all lignotubers.
- . Fence off, and apply herbicide.
- . Most species can be controlled by cutting off at ground level.
- . Other species can sucker from the remaining roots, and must be grubbed out.

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Comments:

- . Leafy plants with dull-green, opposite leaves, notched at the tip, thick and stiff.
- . Shrub grows up to two metres high.
- . Usually has several stems arising from lignotubers.
- . Flowers are pea-shaped, dark red to purple.
- . Pods, small, light brown and pointed.
- . Native to Australia, usually found in arid areas. One of the most toxic plants in Australia.
- . Spread by seed.
- . Animals are affected in the paddock, or while traveling.
- . Mostly sheep and cattle. Horses rarely eat this plant. Browsed as a source of green feed, but not as first choice.
- . May be eaten and controlled by goats, but toxic at times. These plants are not very palatable, intermittently toxic, and seasonal toxicity varies.
- . Trials of genetically modified rumen bacteria are being carried out, to protect sheep and cattle from poisoning.



Picture: *Gastrolobium grandiflorum* Qld DPI

Further Reading:

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Dowling and McKensie. Poisonous Plants. Qld DPI. 1997.
- . Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses. 1998
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds of Australia. 2001
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997