Marsilea drummondii

Common name:
Nardoo

Palatability to Livestock:
Seldom eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:
Moderate risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:
Toxic to cattle, sheep, horses and pigs.

Poisonous Principle:
. Thiaminase,
. Norsequiterpine glucocides.

Effects:
Signs and symptoms;
. Depression and confusion,
. Apparent blindness and head pressing,
. Anaemic condition,
. Sudden collapse, and laboured respiration,
. Small haemmorhages.

Health and Production Problems;
. Chronic anaemia,
. Ill-thrift and maybe death.

Treatment;
. Thiamine by injection, see Vet.
Be aware of potential stock problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:
. After floods, remove stock to nardoo free areas when other fodder is spent. Young green growth seems more toxic than dried off plant.

Comments:
. A water fern, or herb, with a short creeping rhizome, leaves have a slender stalk tipped with four wedge-shaped leaflets, that float on the surface, or spread on dry land and look like a four leaf clover.
. Most species are hairy.
. Fruits on stalks contain spores.
. Found mainly in inland areas, in depressions or river flats subject to flooding.
. Different species are found in all mainland states.
. Toxin levels are greatest in summer, and lowest in winter.
. Often grazed without ill effect, but if they are the only plants available, there will be overdosing and stock losses.
. Mainly sheep and horses are affected.
. Plant toxins affect the brain and nervous system, similar to rock fern.
. Good fodder plant under normal conditions, – high in fibre and tannins.

Further Reading:

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