

Melia azedarach

Common name:

White cedar, Cape lilac, Neem tree,

Palatability to Livestock:

Moderate.

Toxicity to Goats:

Low risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

- . Potentially toxic to sheep, cattle and pigs,
- . Poultry, horses and children and dogs.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Tetranortriterpenes (meliatoxins),
- . Alkaloids and glycosides,
- . Margosin, tannic acid, meliatoxins,
- . Unknown substances.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Excitement, followed by dullness,
- . Difficult breathing, slow heart rate,
- . Vomiting, diarrhoea, convulsions,
- . In humans, symptoms progress from nausea and spasms, to insensibility.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Milk taint from cut leaves.
- . Recovery over several days, or death within 48 hours.

Treatment;

- . None.
- . Be aware of potential stock problems.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Dispose of cuttings carefully
- . Control achieved by grazing management.

Comments:

- . A garden plant or escapee.
- . Large, deciduous tree, bark is dark grey, and fissured.

- . Leaves are large, bipinnate with numerous leaflets, bright green with toothed margins.
- . Lilac flowers in large panicles, in late spring, with 5 petals, and a fragrant perfume.
- . Fruits hang in open bunches, dull yellow, oval, in late summer.
- . Berries are toxic, often remaining on the tree after leaf fall.
- . Six to eight berries can be fatal to children.
- . Found from northern NSW to N Queensland, and to Kimberleys in WA.
- . Similar tree in S Africa.
- . Ripe fruits are more toxic than green leaves.



Picture *Melia azedarach* :wikipedia



Picture: *Melia spp* Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW.

Further Reading:

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- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
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- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.
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- . Wilson Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997.