**Morinda reticulata**

**Common name:**
Mapoon,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Only to horses.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Unknown.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Sheep, cattle and horses.

**Poisonous Principle:**
Selenium.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms:*
. Horses, lameness and loss of hair from mane and tail.
. Sheep, fleece shedding and sudden death.
. Cattle, weight loss.

*Health and Production Problems:*
. Horses may eventually die from eating this plant.
. Sheep can also die.

**Treatment:**
None.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Not practical.

**Comments:**
. Field cases occur during spring and summer after a burn, when new shoots appear.
. Found on the Cape York peninsula as far south as Cooktown, mainly in eucalypt woodland.
. A shrub with a thick woody rootstock and several erect pale green stems.
. Leaves are in opposite pairs, pale green, thick and leathery.

. Flowers are in groups of 6 – 12 crowded into rounded heads; each head with large white leaf-like bracts at the base.
. Plants have a high selenium content, and grow in areas of relatively low selenium levels.
. Animals may die because they cannot reach food and water.
. One attack does not confer immunity.
. Unfortunately, the plant does not grow in areas where stock are affected by low selenium levels, leading to “White Muscle Disease”.

*Picture: Morinda reticulate  ambg.gov.au*

**Further Reading:**