

Rhodomyrtus macrocarpa

Common name:

Finger cherry, Native Loquat,

Palatability to Livestock:

Unknown.

Toxicity to Goats:

High.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Humans, goats, calves, (in N Qld.)

Poisonous Principle:

Rhodomyrtotoxin, saponins.

Effects:

Signs and Symptoms:

. Optic nerve atrophy.

Health and Production Problems:

. Permanent damage to children, who have eaten the fruits in quantity, they suddenly become blind, usually within 24 hour.

Treatment:

. See Doctor or Vet, as soon as possible.

Integrated Control Strategy:

. Be aware of potential problems.

Comments:

- . Grows naturally in the rainforest in N Qld.
- . Native to Australia, also cultivated, and found as an understory plant of rainforests.
- . A large shrub to small tree, with opposite, gland-dotted leaves, 10 – 20cms long.
- . Branches are evergreen and very hairy when young.
- . Leaves are glossy green, opposite, with small glandular dots.
- . White or pink flowers grow in small groups in the leaf forks, five petals and many stamens, in summer to autumn.
- . Fleshy red fruits, 2-4 cm long, with the remnant of the calyx at the end.

- . Seeds are large and kidney shaped.
- . Fruits are considered toxic if eaten in large quantities.
- . Only grows in the high rainfall areas in North Queensland.
- . The plant probably does not grow where livestock are likely to graze it, in rainforest areas.

- . A similar spp. *R. psidioide* or Native guava is similar in size, and grows in similar situations, these leaves are glossy, green, narrow, lance-shaped, and 25cms long.
- . Flowers, white or pink, with fluffy stamens,
- . Fruit, yellow when mature, 3cm long, fleshy
- . Poison information similar to *R. macrocarpa*.



Picture: *Rhodomyrtus macrocarpa* nla.gov.au

Further Reading:

- . Covacevich, Davie and Pearn. Toxic Plants and Animals. 1987
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981.
- . McKenzie R. Veterinary Clinical Toxicology. 2000.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004,