**Salsola kali**

**Common name:**
Soft roly poly, Prickly saltwort, Buckbush, Tumbleweed,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Moderate.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Potentially toxic to sheep and cattle, and horses.

**Poisonous Principle:**
Oxalates.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
- Acute poisoning causes – muscle tremors,
- Staggering gait,
- Collapse,
- Rapid death.

*Health and Production Problems;*
- Chronic kidney disease with associated ill-thrift is possible when large amounts of oxalate producing plants are eaten over a long time.
- When the plant is young it is capable of storing large amounts of nitrate.
- Rapid death, after cattle graze too much young growth over 10cms high.

**Treatment;**
- Be aware of potential stock problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
- Accumulates nitrates when young,
- Do not overgraze pastures.

**Comments:**
- Annual, or biennial small shrub, growing up to sixty cms high.

. Stems are succulent, and leaves are soft, all becoming brittle at maturity.
. Many branches form a clump, which breaks off at the root when dry, and rolls away.
. Leaves are succulent, grey-green, hairless, cylindrical and sharply pointed.
. Flowers are inconspicuous, occurring singly in upper leaf axils.
. The calyx develops into a small, circular, fruiting body that has a broad, wavy, whitish wing all around.
. The plant is edible when young, but unpalatable when older and spiny.
. Germination is rapid after spring or summer rain, stays green and grows for up to 2 years before maturity, when it breaks off.
. Found in all states, as an early colonizer after rain. Occurs mainly in inland areas, but also occasionally on the coast.
. Often found in horse paddocks, because horses find it unpalatable.
. The plant is eaten readily when young, by sheep and cattle.

Further Reading:
- Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Schefe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995
- Huggins and Lucy. Weeds of Southern Qld. 1997
- Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses.1998
- Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000

Picture: Salsola kali rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

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