**Sclerolaena birchii**

**Common name:**
Galvanised burr

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Moderate.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Low risk.

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

**Poisonous Principle:**
Oxalates.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Muscle tremors, staggering gait,
. Collapse, and rapid death.

*Health and Production Problems;*
. Chronic kidney disease and associated ill-thrift is possible when large amounts of oxalate producing plants are eaten over long periods.

*Treatment;*
Be aware of potential stock problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Use goats.
. Collect and burn all plants,
. Control by herbicides, glyphosates, Dicamba®, or 2,4-D ester 300 ®.
. Thoroughly wet the whole plant when spraying, using marker dye if necessary.
. Deep cultivate, fertilise, crop rotation, or pasture improvement. This may not be economical in low rainfall areas.
. Best results are obtained when plants are young.
. Seeds on older plants are not destroyed by herbicides.
. Avoid weather extremes when spraying.

. Declared “Noxious” in parts of Queensland, NSW, and SA.

**Comments:**
. A straggly, perennial, woody plant which grows into a round bush to one metre tall.
. Stems are covered with short white woolly hairs.
. Leaves are hairy, blue green, long and tongue shaped.
. Burrs have 4 – 5 spines about 5mm long.
. Grows on sandy, gravelly soils and is noticeable at the end of droughts.
. At times a virus causes abnormal growth resulting in densely packed, leafy, spineless, clumps in the canopy of older bushes.
. Dense stands indicate a recent history of disturbance by drought and overgrazing; increasing after a run of wet winters and drier summers.
. Dense stands are short lived.
. A useful plant to stabilize soil, and as cover for new useful forage plants.
. Burrs are a problem, but easily removed.

Picture: *Sclerolaena birchii*

**Further Reading:**
. CSIRO.
. Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Schefe and Silcock, Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995

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