

## *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, Sclafe and Silcock, Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995
- . P J Holst. Goats and Their Complementary Role 1991
- . Huggins and Lucy. Weeds of Southern Qld..1997.
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson.
- . Noxious Weeds of Australia. 2001.

Information included in this Info Sheet was obtained from the source documents, and no responsibility will be accepted by the compiler.