

Sclerolaema muricata

Common name:

Black roly poly, Five spined salt bush,

Palatability to Livestock:

Eaten when young.

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 sudden death.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Chronic kidney disease, with 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:

- . Apply herbicide, Group I, to actively growing plants after good soaking rain.
- . Wet thoroughly.
- . Prevent seeding, hoe in before flowering.
- . Spot spray seedlings, use goats to graze the young weeds.
- . This is a declared “Noxious” weed in Victoria, Queensland and parts of NSW.

Comments:

- . A large, rounded, prickly clump to 90cm tall.
- . Leaves are dark blue-green when young, and turn yellowish-green with age, about 10 mm long, and often have scattered hairs.

- . Burrs are yellow, hairless and have 5 spines of differing lengths, the longest is 10mm.
- . Found on clay and loam soils, degraded pastures, and abandoned cultivation.
- . Dense stands indicate recent history of disturbance by drought or overgrazing.
- . Plants increase in number after a run of wet winters after drier summers, however dense stands are short lived.
- . Useful in the first stages of colonizing bare ground, as they stabilize soil and provide ground cover for newly emerging useful forage plants.
- . Burrs in wool cause problems at shearing, but are easily removed during processing.



Picture: *Sclerolaema muricata*

Further Reading:

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992.
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Henry, Hall, Jordan, Milson, Sclafe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of Southern Inland Queensland. 1995.
- . Huggins and Lucy. Weeds of Southern Qld. 1997
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds of Australia. 2001.
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000