**Datura stramonium**

**Common name:**
Thornapple, False Castor Oil, Jimson Weed,

**Palatability to Livestock:**
Not known to be eaten.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
High risk.

**Toxicity to Other Species:**
Toxic to cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, and poultry.

**Poisonous Principle:**
The tropane alkaloids, hyoscyamine, scopolamine and atropine.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Constipation and infrequent urination.
. Excitation, later depression, hallucinations.
. Muscle trembling, weakness leading to an unsteady gait, and eventual recumbency.
. Dilated pupils, dry mouth and nose.
. Increased heart rate, but weak pulse.
. Loss of rumen sounds, laboured respiration.

**Health and Production Problems;**
. Some cases recover, with no long term effects on their productivity, others die.

**Treatment;**
. Be aware of potential stock problems.
. Activated charcoal.
. Herbicides can increase palatability.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Cultivate before seeding, to kill seeds.
. Biological controls are being tested.
. Wick wipe with herbicide before flowering. (Group I), eg Grazon.
. This is a declared “Noxious Weed” in Tas, Vic, Qld, WA. NT.

**Comments:**
. Most plants are annuals, so prevent seeding.
. A very erect weed growing to over a metre.
. Stems and leaves are bright green, tinged with purple. Leaves are large, lobed and alternate, dark above, pale below, pungent smell when crushed.
. Flowers are white, sometimes pink or purple, trumpet shaped, flaring at the open end, about ten cms long., singly in forks of branches, summer to autumn.
. Fruit is an egg-shaped spiny globular capsule, about 5 cms across, with up to 100 spines.
. In autumn the seed capsule dries off to spread the large black seeds, viable for 20 years.
. Summer growing, a problem in wet seasons.
. The plant has a strong bitter taste, and offensive odour, which may deter grazing.
. Humans may get dermatitis from the leaves, flowers or fruit. All parts are toxic to eat.
. Widespread throughout all Australia.

**Picture:** *Datura stramonium*  weeds.org.au

**Further Reading:**
. McBarron. Medical and Veterinary Aspects of Plant Poisons. 1976
. Roth. Weeds. Friend or Foe 2001
. Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004

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