

Gomphocarpus fruticosus

Syn. *Asclepias fruticosus*

Common name:

Narrow-leaf cotton bush

Palatability to Livestock:

Not known to be eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

Moderate risk.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to cattle, sheep, horses, donkeys and pigs.

Poisonous Principle:

Cardiac glycosides, gofrucide,

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Gastro-enteritis,
- . Heart irregularities,
- . Depression,
- . Heart block.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Rapid death in some cases, but little effect in others.

Treatment;

Nil.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Hand pull before flowering, and remove as much of the root stock as possible to prevent suckering.
- . Wick wipe with herbicide Group I.
- . Declared "Noxious" in South Australia.

Comments:

- . Shrub up to 2m high, short-lived evergreen shrub.
- . Stems, few, finely hairy when young.
- . Leaves long and thin, tapering to a fine point, dull green.

- . Flowers 1cm diameter, cream waxy flowers, with five petals, curved downwards, in spring.
- . Satiny greenish-white fruits are oval, covered with soft hairs, tapering to a beak, on an S-shaped stalk.
- . Seeds have a tuft of long silky hairs at one end.
- . Found in central NSW, Qld, SA, Vic, WA,
- . A native of South Africa, found in waste places and roadsides in Australia,



Gomphocarpus fruticosus



Pictures: florabase.calm.wa.gov.au

Further Reading:

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds 1992
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. 1992
Noxious Weeds of Australia.
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997
- . RD. Magic and Medicine of Plants. 1994
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.

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