

Sambucus nigra

Common name:

Elder, Black Elder,

Palatability to Livestock:

Unknown.

Toxicity to Goats:

Unknown.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Reportedly toxic to cattle and pigs.

Poisonous Principle:

- . Unknown toxic alkaloids,
- . Cyanogenetic glycosides
- . Purgative substances.

Effects:

Signs and Symptoms:

- . Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and dizziness.
- . In humans: ripe berries are not considered toxic, but produce nausea if too many are eaten.

Health and Production Problems:

- . Be aware of potential problems.

Treatment:

See Doctor or Vet.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Slash, or use herbicide.

Comments:

- . Berries and flowers are edible, and often used in home wine making.
- . Native to Europe and E Asia.
- . Deciduous tree with light brown bark, which is green on young branches, growing to ten metres high.
- . Large leaves are in opposite pairs, upper surface dark green, paler below, divided into leaflets, lance shaped with toothed margins.
- . Flowers are white to cream, in dense flat topped clusters, star-shaped, musk scented, in late spring to early summer and autumn.

- . Fruit is a berry, shiny, dark purple, eight mm in diameter, in drooping bunches, autumn to winter; must be cooked before eating.
- . Grows in wet areas near rocks and walls.
- . Roots, bark, stem, leaves and unripe berries can be toxic.

. *S. gaudichaudiana*, White Elder, an Australian native, is suspected of poisoning stock.



Picture: *Sambucus nigra*

Further Reading:

- . Cunningham, Mulham, Milthorpe and Leigh. Plants of Western NSW. 1999.
- . Mcvicar. New Book of Herbs. 2002.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.