

## ***Buxus spp***

### **Common name:**

Box hedge, Boxwood,

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Not known to be eaten.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

### **Toxicity to Other Species:**

Potentially toxic to horses, sheep, cattle, pigs and camels, and humans, also domestic pets.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

- . Unknown alkaloids.
- . Buxine and tannic acids.

### **Effects:**

#### *Signs and Symptoms;*

- . Severe gastro-enteritis.
- . Diarrhoea.
- . Respiratory failure.

#### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Affected animals may die.

#### *Treatment;*

Be aware of potential health problems.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Garden plant.
- . Place clippings into disposable bags.
- . Do not feed these garden clippings to livestock.
- . The sap can cause irritation and itching.

### **Comments:**

- . A genus of evergreen shrubs and trees, with square stems, grown for their foliage and habit.
- . It is slow growing and long lived; frost hardy, but requires sun, or only semi-shade, growing to 2-6metres high.

- . Leaves are small, oblong, opposite, glossy and dark green or variegated, smooth, thick and leathery. New growth is golden in the spring.
- . Leaves are toxic to animals and humans.
- . The flowers are insignificant, tiny and pale green, male and female together in leaf axils, appearing in springtime.
- . Fruit is an oblong capsule with black seeds.
- . Used as a dwarf edging plant for gardens, or as pot specimens. Vigorous roots, similar to privet.
- . These plants are often clipped into unusual shapes.
- . All parts are toxic, even the wood.



Picture: *Buxus spp*  
Helen Simmonds. Calga, NSW.

### **Further Reading:**

- . Copeland. Poisonous Plants in Your Garden. 1996
- . Paterson. Herbs in the Garden. 1985.
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004
- . Steginga. Poisonous Plants, Home, Garden, and Bush, 2003
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997