

## *Emex australis*

### **Common name:**

Spiny emex, 3 –corner Jack, Cats head,  
Double gee,

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Moderate.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

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

Sheep, cattle, horses, donkeys.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

Oxalates.

### **Effects:**

#### *Signs and symptoms;*

- . Muscle tremors,
- . Staggering gait,
- . Collapse and rapid death.

#### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Poor condition,
- . Chronic kidney disease, if eaten over a long period.
- . Veg fault in fleece.
- . Mechanical injury to dogs feet.

#### *Treatment;*

- . Be aware of potential problems.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Use “Prickle rollers”.
- . Try goats in the early stages.
- . Grub out and burn.
- . Use herbicides. Try glyphosates.
- . Cultivate. Seed is not viable if ploughed in to a depth of 10 cms or more.
- . This is a declared “Noxious” weed in Victoria, parts of NSW and the rest of Australia.

### **Comments:**

- . An annual broadleaf plant, hairless, spreading, prostrate forb, with a large taproot, spread by seed.
- . It develops as a rosette, from a deep taproot, with branched, creeping, trailing, stems, sometimes red, which are hollow, or green and juicy.
- . Leaves are alternate and oval, on short stalks, with wavy edges.
- . Tiny flowers form in the leaf axils, in warmer months, giving rise to clusters of spiny triangular burrs, which always have one spine upwards.
- . A weed of cereal crops and pasture, sheds, yards and roadways. Native of S.Africa.
- . Seed germination is mainly winter and spring. If conditions are right it can flower all through the year.
- . These weeds are often grazed without causing any problems. Oxalate accumulating plants can often cause a calcium deficiency state in horses.
- . Stock will eat this weed in the seedling stage, and adult goats will eat the weed at all stages, preventing seeding, hopefully.



Picture; *Emex australis* Brushhoff

### **Further Reading:**

- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Kohnke. Feeding and Nutrition of Horses. 1997.
- . Henry, Hall, Jorden, Milson, Sclafe and Silcock. Pasture Plants of South Inland Queensland. 1995.
- . Parsons and Cuthbertson. Noxious Weeds 2001.
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000