**Gomphocarpus physocarpus**

**Common name:**
Balloon cotton bush, Bladder cotton,

**Palatability:**
Not palatable.

**Toxicity to Goats:**
Moderate risk

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

**Poisonous Principle:**
Cardiac glycosides, cardenolide type, similar to digitalis.

**Effects:**
*Signs and symptoms;*
. Gastro-enteritis,
. Heart irregularities,
. Depression, eventually heart block.

*Health and Production Problems;*
. Rapid death in some cases, but little effect in other cases.

*Treatment;*
. Be aware of potential stock problems.

**Integrated Control Strategy:**
. Hand pull before flowering, and remove as much of the root as possible to prevent suckering.
. Wick wipe with herbicide, Group I.
. May be declared “Noxious” in some areas.

**Comments:**
. Shrub up to 2m high, with hairy stems, exudes white milky latex if damaged.
. Leaves, long, soft, smooth, tapering to a fine point.
. Prefers well drained soil in a sunny spot.

. Bell shaped flowers with four petals are white to yellow, in racemes on long stalks, for most of the year.
. Toxins are present in young seedlings.
. Fruits are globular with a sunken tip, on a straight stalk, and covered with soft spines.
. These are greenish white, bladdery and pendulous; fruits have three sharp angles forming three compartments, each has a single black seed.
. Native of South Africa.
. Found in north-eastern NSW, and Queensland.

Further Reading:

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