

Heliotropium europaeum

Common name:

Common heliotrope,

Palatability to Livestock:

Seldom eaten.

Toxicity to Goats:

Moderate toxicity.

Toxicity to Other Species:

Toxic to sheep, cattle and horses.

Poisonous Principle:

Pyrrolizidine alkaloids.

Effects:

Signs and symptoms;

- . Chronic weight loss,
- . Acute jaundice,
- . Photosensitization.

Health and Production Problems;

- . Liver damage, and reduced productivity.
- . Accumulated copper in the liver can kill the animal.
- . Upsets of the CNS.

Treatment;

- . Remove animals from the pasture.
- . Molybdenum drench may help.

Integrated Control Strategy:

- . Regrowth is by seed and root sections.
- . Plants may be killed by frost.
- . Use herbicide in the fallow season, and crop rotation of at least three or four years.
- . Biological control agents are being tested.

Comments:

- . A downy-covered spring to summer growing annual,
- . Leaves are long to oval, grayish upper surface, and paler below.

- . Flowers are small and white, on a coiled spike, in rows, which unravel as the flower matures.
- . Fruits are spotted and wrinkled nutlets.
- . This plant grows prolifically after summer rains.
- . “Yellows”, photosensitization, and red urine are common in livestock eating this plant.
- . The effect is cumulative, and may take a year or so to develop symptoms.



Picture: *Heliotropium europaeum*
weedman.horsham.net.au

Further Reading:

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992.
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . Lamp and Collett. Field Guide to Weeds in Australia. 1979
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants. Handbook. 1983
- . Simmonds, Holst and Bourke. Palatability and Potential Toxicity of Australian Weeds to Goats. 2000.
- . Wilson. Some Plants are Poisonous. 1997