

## *Solanum pseudocapsicum*

### **Common name:**

Madeira winter cherry, Jerusalem cherry

### **Palatability to Livestock:**

Moderate.

### **Toxicity to Goats:**

Low risk.

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

Cattle, pigs and sheep, also humans and pets.

### **Poisonous Principle:**

- . Solanine type alkaloids,
- . Can cause cardio-vascular dysfunction.

### **Effects:**

#### *Signs and symptoms;*

- . Abdominal pain, scouring,
- . Listlessness, maybe some excitement,
- . May cause blindness,
- . Symptoms and degree of toxicity seem to vary, but prudence indicates caution.

#### *Health and Production Problems;*

- . Fruits and seeds poisonous to humans and livestock.

#### *Treatment;*

- . If eaten in large amounts, may cause vomiting (in animals capable of this), expelling the poison. If eaten in lesser amounts, the poison tends to be absorbed from the digestive tract.
- . Restrict water intake.
- . Try activated charcoal.
- . See Vet or Doctor.
- . Poisonings seem to occur from March to November, although berries occur for many months on the bushes.

### **Integrated Control Strategy:**

- . Be aware of potential problems,
- . Pull plants out, and prevent reseeding.
- . Use herbicides.

### **Comments:**

- . An erect, evergreen, perennial shrub, growing up to two metres high.
- . Leaves are on short stalks, bright green, hairless, tapering at both ends, with wavy entire margins, and a prominent mid-rib.
- . Flowers are white, with five tapering, bent-back petals, occurring mostly from spring to autumn, singly or in small groups, on short stalks, in the leaf axils.
- . Fruit is a globular berry, about 15mms across, bright orange-red, like small tomatoes.
- . Fruits are attractive to children, but are poisonous to humans.
- . Reproduces by seed, spread by birds, et al.
- . Plants have been seen at markets, as novelty plants, incorrectly labeled, and sold as edible.
- . A native of South America.
- . Now found in many parts of Australia, in disturbed coastal areas, also in South Australia, and Western Australia.



Picture: *Solanum pseudocapsicum*  
Ron Collins and Helen Simmonds. Calga NSW

### **Further Reading:**

- . Auld and Medd. Weeds. 1992.
- . Blood. Environmental Weeds. Field Guide to SE Australia. CRC Weed Management Systems. 2003
- . Covacevich, Davie and Pearn. Toxic Plants and Animals. 1987.
- . Cunningham. Mulham, Milthorpe and Leigh. Plants of Western NSW. 1999.
- . Everist. Poisonous Plants of Australia. 1981
- . McBarron. Poisonous Plants. Handbook. 1983
- . Shepherd. Pretty but Poisonous. 2004.