



Main South Road, Templeton, Christchurch 8441
P: 03 347 9221 or 0800 800 352 | Fax: 347 9223
info@southernwoods.co.nz | www.southernwoods.co.nz

Info 30 – Poisonous Plants

If you suspect a person has ingested parts of a poisonous plant, immediately contact the National Poisons and Hazardous Chemical Information Centre Urgent Phoneline on 0800 POISON (0800 764 766) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Dial 111 for an ambulance if in doubt.

For non-urgent information, Ph 03 479 1200 between 9am and 5pm week days only.

Plants which can be poisonous to Humans (if eaten)

Angels Trumpet (*Brugmansia candida*). All parts are poisonous.

Apple of Peru (*Nicandra physalodes*). Most parts are likely to be mildly poisonous.

Apple of Sodom (*Solanum linnaeanum*). Has a reasonably large mottled berry (green and white when immature, yellow at maturity) that can be poisonous.

Arum Lily (*Zantedeschia aethiopica*). All parts are poisonous.

Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis*). Has small bright red berries in summer which are mildly poisonous.

Bitter Almond (*Prunus dulcis*). Kernals are poisonous. Not to be confused with the edible sweet almond which all have pink flowers (as opposed to white flowers with a pink base).

Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*). Has small purple flowers and shining scarlet berries that are poisonous.

Black Nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*). Plant is moderately toxic with white star-like flowers. Not to be confused with Deadly Nightshade, which has large bell-shaped brownish-purple flowers.

Blueberry Lily (*Dianella nigra*). Violet berries are poisonous.

Box (*Buxus sempervirens*). Contains the alkaloid buxine which causes nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. The leaves are poisonous to humans but its unpleasant odour and bitter taste tends to minimise its ingestion. Contact can cause skin rashes and the clippings should be handled with care.

Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*). Has orange-red berries which are likely to be poisonous.

Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*). Seeds are poisonous.

Bushman's Poison (*Acokanthera oppositifolia*). All parts of the plants, including the roots and shoots, are extremely toxic.

Caster Oil Plant (*Ricinus communis*). Has attractive mottled seeds that are poisonous.

Celery-leaved Buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*). All foliage is poisonous.

Cestrums (*Cestrum species*). All parts are extremely poisonous.

Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). Has small black fruits with kernels which are poisonous.

Chilean Jasmine (*Mandevilla suaveolens*). A climber with poisonous white latex in all parts of the plant.

Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale* and its hybrid). Although the leaves can be used as a general tonic, if used in higher quantities, they can be harmful over a prolonged period.

Corsican Hellebore (*Helleborus lividus* ssp *corsicus*). All parts are poisonous.

Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster species*). Has pretty red berries which seem to be mildly poisonous.

Cruel Plant (*Araujia sericifera*). The white latex in all parts of the plant is poisonous.

Daffodils & Jonquils (*Narcissus species*). Both bulbs and flowers contain poisonous properties.

Daphne (*Daphne* species). All species are poisonous.

Datura (*Brugmansia candida*). All parts are poisonous.

Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa bella-donna*). Though the root is believed to have the highest concentration of the toxins, the berries are usually the cause of accidental poisoning because of their appealing appearance.

Death Cap & Fly Agaric Fungi (*Agaricus phalloides*, *A. muscaria*) The poisonous compounds are extremely stable. You cannot remove them by soaking, cooking or drying. The poisons are found throughout the cap, gills, stem and spores.

Delphinium (*Delphinium* species). All parts are poisonous.

Dumb Canes (*Dieffenbachia* species). Sap is very poisonous.

Elderberry or Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). The black juicy berries can be made into jam or wine, but easily cause stomach upsets if too many are eaten raw.

Elephant's Ear (*Alocasia brisbanensis*). Although it can be cooked and eaten like the related taro, this plant seems to be more toxic as shown by the tubers or rhizomes taking much longer for the toxic compounds to be broken down.

English Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Seeds, bark, and leaves are all somewhat toxic, but the greatest concentration of caffeine occurs in the berries. If you grow holly in your garden, it is important to keep children from eating the berries.

Fatsia (*Fatsia japonica*). Berries are presumed to be poisonous.

Five Finger or Whauwhaupaku (*Pseudopanax arboreus*). Because it belongs to the ivy family, presume it is likely to be poisonous.

Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*). All parts are extremely poisonous.

Gloriosa Lily (*Gloriosa superba*). All parts are poisonous, especially the tuberous roots.

Hairy Nightshade (*Solanum physalifolium*). Mottled green and white fruits should be treated as poisonous.

Hellebore (*Helleborus* species). All parts are very poisonous.

Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*). All parts are extremely poisonous.

Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*). All parts are poisonous, and neither drying nor boiling destroys the toxic principle. The leaves are the most powerful portion, even the odour of them when fresh will produce giddiness and stupor.

Holly or English Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Scarlet berries are poisonous.

Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus species*). The conkers are mildly poisonous.

Iceland Poppy (*Papaver nudicaule*). All parts are very poisonous.

Inkweed (*Phytolacca octandra*). All parts are poisonous.

Italian Arum (*Arum italicum*). All parts are extremely poisonous.

Ivy (*Hedera helix*). Most parts, including the black berries, are poisonous.

Japanese Spindle Tree (*Euonymus japonicas*). The pink spindle berries and orange-red coated seeds are poisonous.

Jerusalem Cherry (*Solanum diflorum* & *S. pseudocapsicum*). The orange-red berries are very poisonous.

Karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*). The orange fruits are poisonous.

Kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*, *S. tetraptera*). The yellow seeds are very poisonous if ground or crushed before ingesting. If swallowed whole, they will cause no harm.

Laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*). Black seeds are very poisonous if crushed or chewed before swallowing.

Lantana (*Lantana camara*). The small blue-black berries are poisonous.

Larkspur (*Consolida species*). All parts are poisonous.

Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*). All parts are poisonous.

Lily of the Valley shrub (*Pieris species*). All parts are poisonous.

Lupins (*Lupinus species*). Seeds are poisonous if crushed or chewed before swallowing.

Monkshood (*Aconitum species*). All parts are poisonous. Toxins can be absorbed through the skin by touching.

Morning Glory (*Ipomoea* species). Seeds contain very powerful hallucinogenic drugs if crushed or chewed before swallowing.

Moth Plant (*Araujia sericifera*). The white latex in all parts of the plant is poisonous.

Ngaio (*Myoporum* species). All parts are very poisonous.

Nightshades (some *Solanum* species). All contain poisonous compounds.

Oleander (*Nerium oleander*). All parts are extremely poisonous and can be fatal. Smoke is also toxic.

Opium Poppy (*Papaver somniferum*). All parts are poisonous.

Peach (*Prunus persica*). Kernals inside the stone are poisonous.

Pepper Tree (*Schinus molle*). The strings of small pink berries are mildly poisonous.

Persian Lilac or White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*). The bunches of yellow fruits left behind when the leaves fall are poisonous.

Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*). All parts are poisonous.

Poison Ivy (*Rhus radicans*). Can cause dermatitis.

Poroporo (*Solanum laciniatum*, *S. aviculare*). Green or yellow berries are poisonous when uncooked.

Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*). Green or whitish berries and the tubers are all poisonous.

Privet (*Ligustrum* species). The black, blue-black or dark purplish berries are poisonous.

Queen of the Night (*Cestrum nocturnum*). All parts of plant are poisonous if ingested.

Rhododendron species and varieties. Flowers are poisonous. Honey made from the flowers is also poisonous.

Rhubarb (*Rheum rhabarbarum*). Leaf blades are poisonous.

Robinia species. Bark known to be toxic.

Snowberry Bush (*Symphoricarpos albus*). The white marble-sized berries are poisonous. Not to be confused with the native snowberry (*Gaultheria depressa*), which has edible berries.

Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europaeus*). The pink fruits with orange seeds are poisonous, as are all parts of the tree.

Spurges (*Euphorbia species*). All species are poisonous.

Stinking Iris (*Iris foetidissima*). All parts, including the prominent orange seeds, are poisonous.

Swan Plant (*Gomphocarpus fruticosus*, *G. physocarpus*). The milky white latex is poisonous.

Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*). All parts are poisonous.

Thornapple (*Datura stramonium*). The black seed contains a powerful, dangerous drug, as do other parts of the plant.

Titoki (*Alectryon excelsus*). It is presumed the berries/seeds are poisonous.

Tropical Periwinkle (*Catharanthus roseus*, *Vinca rosea*). All parts are poisonous.

Turutu (*Dianella nigra*). Violet berries are poisonous.

Tutsan (*Hypericum androsaemum*). Black berries are mildly poisonous.

Tutu (*Coriaria species*). All species are very poisonous, including the fleshy black berries.

White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*). Fruits and leaves are poisonous if eaten in quantity.

Winter Rose (*Helleborus niger*). All parts are poisonous.

Wisteria (*Wisteria species*). Pods and seeds of this legume are poisonous.

Woolly Nightshade (*Solanum mauritianum*). The globular dull yellow berries are mildly poisonous.

Yew (*Taxus baccata*). All parts are poisonous.

External Poisons (Harmful if Touched)

Stinging Nettle (*Urtica species*)

Wax Tree or Japanese Wax Tree (*Rhus succedanea*)

Plants which can be poisonous to Stock (if eaten)

Albizia, Brush Wattle. Ingestion of seeds can cause kidney failure.

Angels Trumpet (*Brugmansia spp*). All parts toxic, especially flowers and seeds.

Apple. Leaves and seed considered toxic in large amounts.

Apple of Sodom (*Solanum linnaeanum*). All parts toxic, especially the berries.

Arum Lily (*Zantedeschia aethiopica*). All parts considered toxic. Normally avoided by stock because of pungent taste.

Asparagus Fern (*Asparagus densiflorus cv sprengeri*). Red berries poisonous.

Autumn Crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*). All parts known to be toxic.

Avocado. Leaves, depending on season. Seeds may kill mice.

Azalea. All parts lethal.

Bittersweet. (*Solanum dulcamara*). All parts are toxic, especially berries.

Black Laurel (*Leucothoe davisiae*). Ingestion of a few leaves can cause serious problems.

Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Leaves, especially wilted leaves, young shoots, pods, seeds, inner bark.

Black Nightshade (*Solanum species*). Take care with unripe berries.

Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*). Horses are susceptible to laminitis from exposure to black walnut wood in bedding.

Blue Lupins (*Lupinus*). Known to be toxic when infected with fungus *Phomopsis leptostromiformis*.

Box (*Buxus sempervirens*). Leaves known to kill stock. Death may occur through respiratory failure.

Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*). Scarlet berries thought to be toxic.

Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Prolonged feeding will cause fatalities in stock. New growth is more toxic.

Brassicas (Cabbage, Cauliflower etc). Too much can be toxic to stock.

Brush Ironbark Wattle (*Acacia disparrima*). Ingestion of seeds can cause kidney failure in alpacas.

Burning Bush (*Euonymus atropurpurens*). Vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, weakness. Heart rhythm abnormalities with large doses.

Buttercups (*Ranunculus* spp.). Known to cause irritation of mucous membranes and inflammation of the intestinal tract. Different varieties contain different amounts of toxin. Some species are known to kill stock if sufficient ingested. Ok tried in hay.

Cape Lilac (*Melia azedarach*). Berries toxic.

Cape Tulip (*Moraea flaccida*). Both leaves and corms are toxic even when dried.

Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*). All parts poisonous.

Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*). Seeds poisonous.

Castor Oil Plant (*Ricinus communis*). Seed mainly, but also leaves.

Cherry Laurel (*Prunus lauroceracus*). Leaves not normally palatable to stock but known to be toxic.

Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*). All parts toxic.

Chinese Tallow Tree (*Sapium sebiferum*). Mildly toxic.

Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*). Animals become poisoned if they eat large quantities of the leaves in a short time.

Climbing Lily (*Gloriosa* genus). All parts known to be extremely toxic.

Crown Vetch (*Coronilla* spp.) If animals ingest the plant in large amounts, it can cause paralysis or death.

Daffodils. Seldom eaten by stock. All parts poisonous. Toxic when stem and bulb of just 1 plant is eaten.

Daphne (*Daphne mesereum*). All parts contain toxins.

Datura (*Brugmansia candida*). All parts, especially seeds.

Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*s). All parts toxic (even when dried).

Facial Exzema Fungus. Overwinters on litter in pasture. Requires 12 degrees Celsius for 72 hours with a relative humidity exceeding 98% for high spore counts (normally Feb and March).

Fat Hen (*Chenopodium album*). Stem and roots accumulate nitrates. Has killed cows in NZ.

Field Horsetail. Thought to be toxic to horses and cattle. Toxicity does not reduce when dried.

Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*). All parts, especially the seeds, are toxic. More toxic when dried. Affects heart.

Golden Chain Tree (*Laburnum anagyroides*). All parts of the tree are poisonous: roots, bark, wood, leaves, flower-buds, petals, and seedpods.

Gotu kola (*Centella asiatica*). All parts are considered toxic.

Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*). All parts toxic if sufficient ingested.

Hairy Vetch (*Vicia villosa*). The disease prevalence is greatest when the major component of the forage is hairy vetch or when the plant is reaching maturity in mid to late spring. The plant is less likely to cause a problem in hay or when ensiled.

Hellebore spp. All parts toxic (even when dried).

Hemlock (*Conium maculatum* & *Cicuta spp.*) All parts toxic, especially the seeds (even when dried).

Horsebane (*Oenanthe phellandrium*). Leaves considered toxic.

Horse Chestnut or Buckeye (*Aesculus spp.*) Seeds (conkers) and leaves toxic.

Hydrangea (*Hydrangea spp.*) Hydrangeas are moderately toxic if ingested.

Iceland Poppy (*Papaver nudicaule*). All parts are toxic to stock.

Indian Bead (*Melia azedarach*). All parts toxic.

Inkweed (*Phytolacca octandra*). Not normally touched by stock, but known to be toxic. Red-black berries, leaves and roots. Unpalatable to alpacas.

Iris. Leaves and corm highly toxic (both green and dried).

Ivy (*Hedera spp*). All parts and all species, but mainly berries are eaten, as leaves are bitter. Has killed cows when eaten in large amounts.

Japanese Pieris (*Pieris japonica*). Highly toxic if ingested.

Jerusalem Cherry (*Solanum pseudocapsicum*). All parts toxic, especially the berries.

Kaffir Lily (*Clivia spp*). All parts toxic. Normally avoided by stock.

Karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*). Raw kernel of orange berries.

Kentucky Coffee Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*). The leaves, seeds and pulp are poisonous and have affected sheep, cattle, horses, and humans.

Kowhais (*Sophora spp.*) All, especially yellow seeds in long pods.

Laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*). All parts highly toxic, especially bark, seeds and unripened pods.

Lantana (*Lantana camara*). Some varieties are toxic, especially green berries.

Larkspur (*Delphinium spp*). All parts toxic (even when dried).

Laurel (*Kalmia spp*). The green parts of the plant, flowers, twigs, and pollen are all toxic

Lillies. A few are poisonous and cause stinging in mouth.

Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*). All parts known to be toxic, especially seeds.

Lobelia (*Lobelia cardinalis*). All parts toxic.

Lucerne (*Medicago sativa*). Known to depress reproductive performance in ewes.

Lupins (*Lupinus spp.*). Seeds are poisonous if crushed or chewed before swallowing.

Macrocarpa (*Cupressus macrocarpa*). Known to cause abortion in stock. Also known to cause death in calves cattle if sufficient is ingested. Okay for male alpaca.

Milkweed (*Asclepias species*). Generally unpalatable to stock. Large amounts considered toxic.

Monkshood (*Aconitum spp*). Ingestion of even a small amount results in severe gastrointestinal upset but it is the effect on the heart, where it causes slowing of the heart rate, which is often the cause of death.

Mushrooms. Many species both edible and inedible. Suggest care. Two to watch out for are Fly Agaric and Death Cap.

Ngaio (*Myoporum laetum*). Leaves and seed toxic.

Night Queen (*Cestrum nocturnum*) . All parts toxic (even when dried).

Oaks (*Quercus spp*). Acorns can be toxic to sheep, cattle and pigs.

Oleander (*Nerium oleander*). All parts fatal (even when dried). Smoke is also toxic.

Peach. Leaves and kernel considered toxic in large amounts.

Persian Lilac (*Melia azerdarach*). All parts toxic.

Pigeonwood (*Hedycarya arborea*). All parts suspected of being toxic.

Plum. Leaves and kernel considered toxic in large amounts.

Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*). Milky sap blisters skin and stings mouth.

Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*). May cause abortion in stock.

Poppy (*Papaver spp.*). All parts. Iceland & Opium Poppies.

Poroporo (*Solanum aviculare var. aviculare*). Leaves and green fruit are toxic.

Portuguese Laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*). Berries are poisonous to horses and stock.

Potato. Berries and green or sprouted potatoes are toxic.

Privet (*Ligustrum spp*). Leaves and berries are toxic if enough is ingested.

Pukatea (*Laurelia novæ-zealandiæ*). Bark known to be toxic to sheep.

Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*). All parts toxic. Causes intestinal problems with prolonged feeding and high quantities.

Red Maple & Hybrids (*Acer rubrum*). Ingestion of wilted or partially dried red maple leaves from fallen or pruned branches are toxic.

Rhododendron. All parts known to be toxic to alpacas. Lethal. Prunings included.

Rhubarb. Leaves poisonous. Has oxalic acid, do not eat raw or cooked.

Rhus (*Rhus Dermatitis*). All parts toxic.

Robinia (*Robinia spp.*). Bark known to be toxic to horses.

Rock Ferns (*Cheilanthes distans* & *C. sieberi*). Prolonged feeding thought to cause multiple haemorrhaging in stock.

Sheep Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*). Continual usage builds up oxalate crystals in sheep.

Spindle Tree (*Euonymus europæus*). All parts toxic, especially berries.

St Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). All parts known to cause photosensitisation (oversensitivity to light).

Star of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum arabicum*). Bulbs only thought to be toxic.

Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Harmful if touched, especially native tree nettle.

Storksbill (*Erodium Cicutarium*). Seedhead can work through fleece and pierce skin. High dietary intake known to cause staggers in sheep and cattle.

Strathmore Weed (*Pimelea prostrata*). Known to be toxic to horses and cattle.

Sweet Peas (*Lathyrus spp.*). Pods, known to cause skeletal deformities in stock.

Thorn Apple (*Brugmansia candida*). All parts toxic, especially the seeds.

Tree Nettle (*Urtica ferox*). Stinging hairs. Known to kill horses and dogs.

Tung Tree (*Aleurites fordii*). All parts known to be toxic.

Tutu or Toot (*Coriaria arborea*). All parts toxic, especially berries and honey made from Tutu.

Virginia Creeper (*Parthenociccus quinquefolia*). Berries toxic.

Waoriki (*Ranunculus amphitrichus*). Found in waterways. Toxic.

Wattle (*Acacia spp.*). Some species suspected of poisoning.

Wax Tree (*Toxicodendron succedaneum*). Harmful if touched.

White Cedar (*Melia azedarach*). All parts toxic.

Yellow Oleander (*Thevetia spp.*). Nectar and leaves are toxic. Poisoning can also occur if honey made by bees that used the oleander plant for nectar is ingested.

Yew (*Taxus spp.*). All parts are toxic, even dried and wilted. Lethal.

Please note that this list contains a range of plants both common and rare in New Zealand. While we have attempted to include as many details as possible, Southern Woods takes no responsibility for dangerous plants not listed on this info sheet.