

Paterson's curse

It is a major weed of Australia's pastures. The plant is usually unpalatable but horses will eat it if there is little other available forage. All parts of the plant are toxic and the toxicity is not lost in dried plants.



Crotalaria

Poisoning cases are still occasionally reported and crotalaria poisoning can be a significant problem for horse owners in northern regions of Australia where crotalarias are common, particularly when those areas are affected by drought.



Avocado

All parts of avocado trees are poisonous to horses but the leaves contain the highest levels of toxins. The leaves of avocado trees are toxic even when fallen and dried.



Prunus

Many species of Prunus are grown in Australia, either as orchard fruits or as garden ornamentals. The ingestion of only small quantities of prunus leaves can be enough to cause poisoning in horses.



Oleander

The plant is extremely toxic to all species, including humans. A study on the toxicity of oleander showed that the ingestion of only 7 leaves could be fatally toxic to an average sized horse. All parts of oleander trees are toxic and this toxicity is retained in dried leaves, flowers and branches.



Red maple

The bark and the dried or wilted leaves of red maple are known to be toxic to horses. Fresh green leaves are not toxic to horses.



Plants Poisonous to Horses

Many plants that grow in Australia are potentially poisonous to horses. Usually horses will avoid consuming toxic amounts of poisonous plants. However, some poisonous plants are palatable to horses and some need only be consumed in very small amounts to cause poisoning.

This guide highlights some of the highly toxic plants that are found in most states of Australia. Refer to rirdc.gov.au for full guide.