

# List of plants poisonous to equines

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[Paterson's Curse](#) has been responsible for the deaths of many horses.

Many plants are poisonous to [equines](#); the species vary depending on location, climate and grazing conditions. In many cases, entire [genera](#) are poisonous to equines and include many species spread over several continents. Plants can cause reactions ranging from [laminitis](#) (found in horses bedded on shavings from [black walnut](#) trees), [anemia](#), [kidney disease](#) and kidney failure (from eating the wilted leaves of [red maples](#)), to [cyanide](#) poisoning (from the ingestion of plant matter from members of the *[Prunus](#)* genus) and other symptoms. Members of the *Prunus* genus have also been theorized to be at fault for [mare reproductive loss syndrome](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Some plants, including [yew](#), are deadly and extremely fast-acting.<sup>[2]</sup> Several plants, including [nightshade](#), become more toxic as they wilt and die, posing a danger to horses eating dried [hay](#) or plant matter blown into their pastures.<sup>[3]</sup>

The risk of animals becoming ill during the [fall](#) is increased, as many plants slow their growth in preparation for winter, and equines begin to browse on the remaining plants. Many toxic plants are unpalatable, so animals will avoid them where possible. However, this is not always the case;[locoweeds](#), for example, are addictive and once a horse has eaten them, it will continue to eat them whenever possible, and can never be exposed to them again. When a toxic plant is ingested, it can be difficult to diagnose, because exposure over time can cause symptoms to occur after the animal is no longer exposed to the plant. Toxins are often metabolized before the symptoms become obvious, making it hard or impossible to test for them.<sup>[4]</sup> Hungry or thirsty horses are more likely to eat poisonous plants, as are those pastured on [overgrazed lands](#).<sup>[5]</sup> Animals with mineral deficiencies due to poor diets will sometimes seek out poisonous plants.<sup>[6]</sup> Poisonous plants are more of a danger to livestock after [wildfires](#), as they often regrow more quickly.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Poisonous plants[\[edit\]](#)

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Crofton weed (*Ageratina adenophora*) (flowers and leaves)



The deadly *Nerium oleander*

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<a href="#"><i>Abrus precatorius</i></a>	Crab's eye	Also known as precatory bean, rosary pea or jequirity bean
<a href="#"><i>Acer rubrum</i></a>	Red maple, also known as swamp or soft maple	
<a href="#"><i>Adonis microcarpa</i></a>	Pheasant's eye	
<a href="#"><i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i></a>	Horse chestnut	Also known as buckeye
<a href="#"><i>Ageratina</i></a>	Snakeroots	Known poisonous species include <a href="#"><i>Ageratina adenophora</i></a> (Crofton weed, causes Tallebudgera horse disease) and <a href="#"><i>Ageratina altissima</i></a> (white snakeroot)
<a href="#"><i>Aleurites</i></a>	Tung oil tree	
<a href="#"><i>Amsinckia intermedia</i></a>	Fiddleneck	
<a href="#"><i>Apocynum cannabinum</i></a>	Hemp dogbane	Also known as Indian hemp, choctaw root, rheumatism weed, and snake's milk
<a href="#"><i>Arctotheca calendula</i></a>	Cape weed	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<a href="#"><i>Armoracia lapathifolia</i></a>	Horseradish	
<a href="#"><i>Artemisia</i></a>		Known poisonous species include <a href="#"><i>Artemisia tridentata</i></a> (big sagebrush) and <a href="#"><i>Artemisia filifolia</i></a> (sand sagebrush)
<a href="#"><i>Asclepias syriaca</i></a>	Common milkweed	
<a href="#"><i>Astragalus</i></a>	Locoweed or crazy weed, milk vetch	Addictive
<a href="#"><i>Atropa belladonna</i></a>	Deadly nightshade or belladonna	
<a href="#"><i>Baptisia</i></a>	False indigo	
<a href="#"><i>Berteroa incana</i></a>	Hoary alyssum	
<a href="#"><i>Brassica</i></a>	Mustards	
<a href="#"><i>Buxus sempervirens</i></a>	Boxwood	
<a href="#"><i>Celastrus scandens</i></a>	Climbing bittersweet	
<a href="#"><i>Centaurea</i></a>	Thistles	Known poisonous species include <a href="#"><i>Centaurea solstitialis</i></a> (yellow star thistle or St. Barnaby's thistle) and <a href="#"><i>Centaurea repens</i></a> (Russian knapweed)
<a href="#"><i>Cestrum parqui</i></a>	Green cestrum	
<a href="#"><i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i></a>	Rubber rabbitbrush	
<a href="#"><i>Cicuta</i></a>	Water hemlock, cowbane	
<a href="#"><i>Claviceps paspali</i></a>	Paspalum ergot	
<a href="#"><i>Conium maculatum</i></a>	Hemlock or poison hemlock	
<a href="#"><i>Corydalis</i></a>	Fitweed, fumitory	
<a href="#"><i>Craspedia chrysanthra</i></a>	Round billy button or woollyhead	
<a href="#"><i>Crotalaria</i></a>	Rattlepods	

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<a href="#"><i>Cucumis myriocarpus</i></a>	Paddy melon	
<a href="#"><i>Cuscuta</i></a>	Dodder	
<a href="#"><i>Cynoglossum officinale</i></a>	Houndstongue	
<a href="#"><i>Datura</i></a>	Jimsonweed, thorn-apple	
<a href="#"><i>Delphinium</i></a>	Larkspur	
<a href="#"><i>Dendrocnide moroides</i></a>	Stinging tree or Gympie stinger	
<a href="#"><i>Descurainia pinnata</i></a>	Tansy mustard	
<a href="#"><i>Digitalis</i></a>	Foxgloves	
<a href="#"><i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i></a>	Male fern	
<a href="#"><i>Duboisia</i></a>	Corkwoods	
<a href="#"><i>Echium plantagineum</i></a>	Paterson's curse	Also known as Salvation Jane, blue weed and Lady Campbell weed
<a href="#"><i>Equisetum</i></a>	Horsetails, mare's tails, scouring rush	
<a href="#"><i>Erythrophleum chlorostachys</i></a>	Cooktown ironwood	
<a href="#"><i>Euphorbia</i></a>	Spurges	
<a href="#"><i>Festuca arundinacea</i></a>	Tall fescue	
<a href="#"><i>Franseria discolor</i></a>	White ragweed	
<a href="#"><i>Glechoma hederacea</i></a>	Ground ivy	Also known as creeping charlie
<a href="#"><i>Grindelia</i></a>	Gumweeds	
<a href="#"><i>Haplopappus heterophyllus</i></a>	Rayless goldenweed	Also known as jimmyweed or burrow weed
<a href="#"><i>Heliotropium</i></a>	Heliotropes	Known poisonous species include <a href="#"><i>Heliotropium amplexicaule</i></a> (blue heliotrope), <a href="#"><i>Heliotropium europaeum</i></a> (common heliotrope) and <a href="#"><i>Heliotropium supinum</i></a> (creeping heliotrope)
<a href="#"><i>Homeria</i></a>	Cape tulips	
<a href="#"><i>Hypericum perforatum</i></a>	St. John's wort	Also known as Klamath weed
<a href="#"><i>Hypochaeris radicata</i></a>	Flatweed or catsear	Has been implicated in causing Australian stringhalt, possibly due to a toxic mold that grows on it, especially poisonous to draft horses
<a href="#"><i>Juglans nigra</i></a>	Black walnut	Bedding horses in shavings or sawdust can cause <a href="#"><i>laminitis</i></a>

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<a href="#"><i>Juniperus virginiana</i></a>	Juniper	
<a href="#"><i>Kalmia latifolia</i></a>	Mountain laurel or spoonwood	Also known as spoonwood or calico bush
<a href="#"><i>Kochia scoparia</i></a>	Burning bush	Also known as summer cypress or Mexican firewood
<a href="#"><i>Lantana camara</i></a>	Yellow sage	
<a href="#"><i>Ligustrum</i></a>	Privets	
<a href="#"><i>Lolium perenne</i></a>	Perennial ryegrass	
<a href="#"><i>Lupinus</i></a>	Lupins	
<a href="#"><i>Malva parviflora</i></a>	Mallow	
<a href="#"><i>Marsilea drummondii</i></a>	Nardoo	Contains an enzyme which destroys vitamin B <sub>1</sub> , leading to brain damage in sheep and horses
<a href="#"><i>Melilotus</i></a>	Sweetclover	Includes <a href="#"><i>Melilotus alba</i></a> (white sweetclover) and <a href="#"><i>Melilotus officinalis</i></a> (yellow sweetclover), can be grazed as a forage crop, but mold or spoilage converts <a href="#">coumarins</a> to toxic <a href="#">dicumarol</a> , thus moldy hay or silage is dangerous
<a href="#"><i>Nerium oleander</i></a>	Oleander	Also known as rose laurel, adelfa, rosenlorbeer
<a href="#"><i>Nicotiana</i></a>	Tobacco	
<a href="#"><i>Onoclea sensibilis</i></a>	Sensitive fern or meadow fern	
<a href="#"><i>Oxytropis</i></a>	Locoweed or crazy weed	Addictive
<a href="#"><i>Persea americana</i></a>	Avocado	
<a href="#"><i>Physalis</i></a>	Japanese lanterns, groundcherries	
<a href="#"><i>Phytolacca americana</i></a>	Pokeweed	
<a href="#"><i>Prunus</i></a>	Cherries, apricots, peaches and plums	
<a href="#"><i>Pteridium esculentum</i></a> / <a href="#"><i>Pteridium aquilinum</i></a>	Bracken fern	
<a href="#"><i>Quercus</i></a>	Oaks	
<a href="#"><i>Ranunculus</i></a>	Buttercups	
<a href="#"><i>Raphanus</i></a>	Mustards	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<a href="#"><i>Rhododendron</i></a>	Azaleas, laurels and rose bays	
<a href="#"><i>Ricinus communis</i></a>	Castor oil plant	Also known as the castor bean or palma Christi, fatal even in small amounts
<a href="#"><i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i></a>	Locust	Also known as false acacia
<a href="#"><i>Romulea</i></a>		Known poisonous species include <a href="#"><i>Romulea longifolia</i></a> (Guildford grass) and <a href="#"><i>Romulea rosea</i></a> (onion grass or onion weed)
<a href="#"><i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i></a>	Goldenglow, coneflower, thimbleweed	
<a href="#"><i>Senecio</i></a>	Ragworts, groundsel, or stinking willy	
<a href="#"><i>Silybum marianum</i></a>	Variegated thistle	Poisons cattle, sheep and rarely horses
<a href="#"><i>Solanum</i></a>	Potatoes, tomatoes, nightshades, horse nettle, ground cherry, Jerusalem cherry	
<a href="#"><i>Solidago</i></a>	Goldenrod	
<a href="#"><i>Sorghum</i></a>	Sudan grass, Johnson grass	
<a href="#"><i>Stachys arvensis</i></a>	Field woundwort or stagger weed	
<a href="#"><i>Stipa viridula</i></a>	Sleepy grass	
<a href="#"><i>Swainsona</i></a>	Darling peas	
<a href="#"><i>Taraxacum officinale</i></a>	Dandelion	When infected with a toxic mold that grows on it, the plant has been linked to outbreaks of Australian <a href="#"><u>stringhalt</u></a> .
<a href="#"><i>Taxus</i></a>	Yews	
<a href="#"><i>Trifolium pratense</i></a>	Red clover	
<a href="#"><i>Vinca major</i></a>	Blue periwinkle or large periwinkle	
<a href="#"><i>Wislizenia refracta</i></a>	Jackassclover	
<a href="#"><i>Xanthium strumarium</i></a>	Cocklebur	
<a href="#"><i>Zephyranthes atamasco</i></a>	Atamasco lily or rain lily	

