

WEED INFORMATION SHEET

CALTROP

Turf Weed

Tribulus terrestris—also known as Caltrop, Yellow Vine, and Cathead.

Description—A branching, prostrate annual and perennial with a woody taproot. Leaves of 4-8 pairs of unequal, oblong to ovate leaflets; upper surface dark green, paler underneath. Flowers bright yellow, are singular with five petals. Fruit is a star shaped burr of 5 wedge shaped segments, each covered with short, hard spikes. 2 spikes near the tip, usually 2 shorter spikes at the base. Spikes can vary in length.

Problem— The spiky fruit can injure the feet and mouths of animals and can also become a contaminant of wool and stockfeed. It can also cause photosensitisation and chronic irreversible hindquarter staggers in sheep and nitrate poisoning in sheep and cattle. Can become major weed of roadsides, pastures, wasteland and other disturbed sites. Spiky fruit adheres to almost anything including stock, clothing, tyres etc and can be easily spread.

