



# Golden Corydalis

*Corydalis aurea*

Golden corydalis is a spreading, yellow-flowered member of the poppy family. It is sometimes referred to as scrambled eggs. Its stems are pale or whitish and leafy. The leaves have numerous small segments.

The yellow flowers, irregularly shaped and spurred at the base, occur from February to May. They appear in loose clusters at the ends of the branches. The seeds are black and shiny.

## Distribution and habitat

The plant is distributed widely in the western half and central parts of Texas. It is also found north to South Dakota, west to Utah and in southern Nevada and Arizona.

Golden corydalis often grows in disturbed areas, along stream banks, in open woods and in sandy soils throughout Texas. Regions: 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

## Toxic agent

This plant reportedly contains up to 10 alkaloids. Sheep like this plant, and eating as little as 2 percent of their weight can cause clinical signs. Less than 5 percent can be fatal.

Although this plant reportedly poisons cattle and horses, they

generally are much more resistant than sheep. Goats are least susceptible, cattle intermediate, and sheep are most susceptible.

Livestock losses from this plant are much lower in Texas than in other states, such as Arizona.

## Livestock signs

Cattle and sheep clinical signs are similar and often appear within minutes and usually within a few hours of consuming corydalis. They include:

- Uneasiness
- Twitching facial muscles
- Rapid respiration
- Staggering and falling into convulsions

Downed animals make running motions with their feet. Diarrhea and bleating or bawling are common. Throughout the period of clinical signs, the animals bite at nearby objects.

Affected animals usually experience several cycles of these fits, between which they exhibit normal behavior. In lethal cases, breathing and heart action slow, and after successive convulsive periods, the animal dies. Animals not lethally poisoned usually recover quickly and uneventfully.

## Integrated management strategies

Golden corydalis has not been a serious problem in Texas. Range management practices promoting improved range condition help reduce losses to this plant. Proper supplemental feeding programs also help.

For extreme populations, graze infested pastures with livestock least susceptible to corydalis poisoning.



↖ Leaf

Flower ↗

Whole plant ↓

