



Houndstongue



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(*Cynoglossum officinale* L.)

Houndstongue is a biennial that forms a rosette the first year and bolts and flowers the second. The leaves are oblong, very pubescent and rough. Plants grow to a height of 1 to 4 feet and flower in midsummer. Flowers are red to burgundy, small and arranged in clusters. Each flower produces three or four nutlets, which have a very hard coat and are covered with barbs. The barbs cling to clothing, machinery and animals which allows the plant to spread long distances.

Plants generally are found in wooded areas or in pastures near trees and shrubs. Nutlets on sheep can reduce the value of wool and can irritate animals if they become imbedded near the eye. Houndstongue contains alkaloids that are especially toxic to cattle and horses. Animals rarely graze green plants but will eat dried plants in hay.

