

Eastern baccharis *Baccharis halimifolia*



Much branched shrub or small tree, 1 to 4 m tall. Leaves alternate, evergreen, simple, elliptic to ovate, 3 to 7 cm long, 1 to 4 cm wide; margins coarsely serrate to rarely entire. Flowers inconspicuous, but fruits with white bristles on top sufficiently numerous to give the whole plant a white or silvery appearance in the fall (hence one common name, "silverling"). Found in all of

the coastal states, Virginia to Florida to Texas; much more abundant in lower Coastal

Plain; in salt marshes, low grounds, fence rows, open woods, pastures, and roadsides.
[Inset: closeup]

Toxicity

The leaves and flowers of this plant contain a cardioactive glycoside and are attractive to cattle and sheep in the early spring. The evergreen appearance is particularly attractive to cattle when other forage is not available.

Symptoms

Staggering, trembling, convulsions, diarrhea, and other gastrointestinal symptoms are common signs.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment. Use gastrointestinal protectives if diarrhea is present. Use sedatives if convulsions occur.