



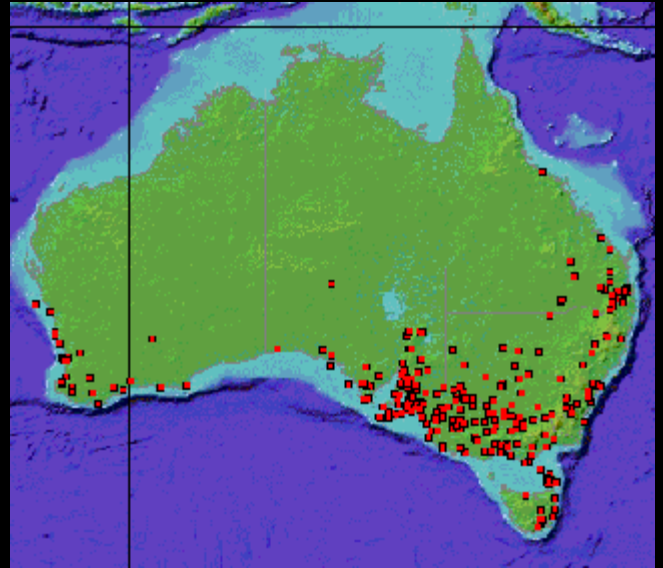
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# Stinging Nettle

Urtica Dioica



Courtesy of Australian virtual herbarium

**Description:** Dwarf Nettle is an annual herb with square stems to 800 mm high with harsh stinging hairs. The leaves are opposite, with an egg-shaped blade 2-7 cm long and 1.5-5 cm wide, and clearly toothed. The separate male and female flowers are greenish and loosely clustered in the leaf axils

**As A Soil Indicator:** Very low Calcium, Very low Phosphorus, Very high Potassium, Very high Magnesium, High Manganese, Very high Iron, Very high Sulfate, Very high Copper, High Zinc, High Boron, High Chlorine, Very high Selenium, Low humus in the soil, Anaerobic bacteria dominate, Compacted soils, low waterlogged area, Poor drainage, High Aluminum levels

**Life cycle:** Annual. Germinates from autumn to spring. Flowers from July to December

**Beneficial:** A highly acclaimed boiled vegetable, tea or soup. Mineral accumulator

**Detrimental:** Considered a weed of gardens, vegetables, pasture, stock yards, orchards, plantations, woodlands and disturbed areas. Unpalatable and usually avoided by all animals

**Toxicity:** Contact causes a reddening of the area with itching, followed by swelling then an intense burning sensation on the skin in people. In most it soon passes but it may last up to 36 hours or longer.

Not recorded as toxic to stock. Cattle occasionally eat them with no apparent effect