

# POISONOUS PLANT IDENTIFICATION

## POISON IVY

*Toxicodendron radicans*

up to 6'

up to 150'

2-6"

Spring Fall

Poison ivy grows in sun or shade. Woody shrub or a vine. Climbs high or trails along the ground. "Leaflets three, let it be" is a reminder of this consistent leaf characteristic. Leaflets may be toothed or have smooth edges. Flowers and fruit are always in clusters on slender stems that originate in the leaf axils, or angles, between the leaves and woody twigs. The berrylike fruits are round and grooved with a white, waxy coating.

## HOW TO DEAL

All four of these common plants contain urushiol, a plant oil that can cause a severe skin rash or allergic reaction when contact is made with any part of the plant or oil.

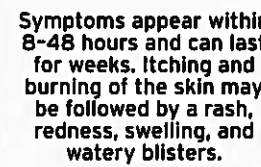


Even the smoke from burning these plants contains oil particles that can be inhaled and cause lung irritation.

If exposed, immediately cleanse exposed skin, tools, shoes, or other items with warm, soapy water and then rinse thoroughly with fresh, cool water.



Clothes should also be washed thoroughly and separately from other laundry.



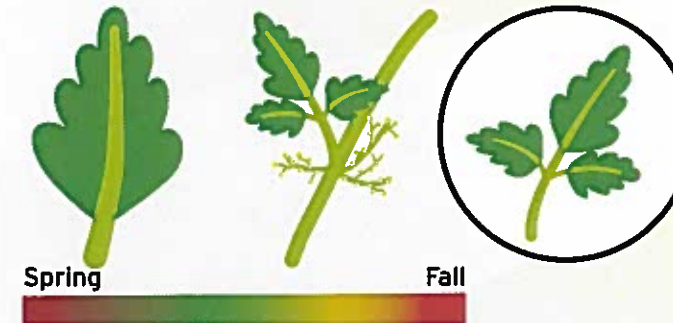
Symptoms appear within 8-48 hours and can last for weeks. Itching and burning of the skin may be followed by a rash, redness, swelling, and watery blisters.



The rash, once properly cleaned, can last for 2-5 weeks, but is not contagious and will not spread.

## POISON OAK

*Toxicodendron pubescens*



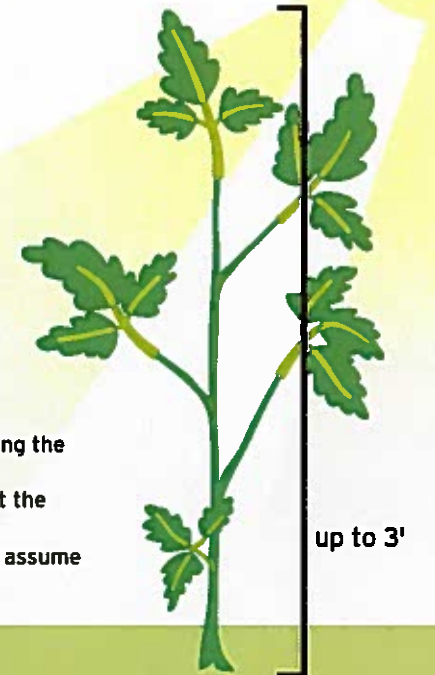
Poison oak is a low-growing, upright shrub.

It is found in dry, sunny locations and does not tolerate heavy shade.

The stem attaching the terminal leaflet is longer than the stems attaching the other two.

One distinguishing feature of poison oak is its lobed leaves, which give it the appearance of an oak leaf.

Leaflets emerge with a reddish tinge in the spring, turn green, and then assume varying shades of yellow and red in the fall before dropping.



## POISON SUMAC

*Metopium toxiferum*

Spring Fall

1-2"

2-4"

5-20'

Poison sumac is a deciduous woody shrub or small tree that has a sparse, open form. It inhabits swamps and other wet areas, pine woods, and shady hardwood forests. Poison sumac leaves consist of 7-13 leaflets. Leaflets are elongated, oval, and have smooth margins with a smooth, velvety texture. Flowers mature into ivory-white to gray fruits resembling those of poison oak or poison ivy, but they are usually less compact and hang in loose clusters of up to 10-12 inches in length.

## POISONWOOD

*Metopium toxiferum*

25-35'

Poisonwood is an evergreen shrub or tree that grows 25-35 feet tall in hammocks, pinelands, and sandy areas near saltwater. The tree has a spreading, rounded form with a short trunk and arching limbs with drooping branches. The bark varies in color from reddish brown to gray, depending on the habitat, and has oily patches of sap on the surface; older trees have scaly bark. Each leaf is comprised of three to seven oval leaflets, although five leaflets are typical. Leaves are glossy and dark green above, paler underneath, and have smooth margins (leaf edges). Irregular blotches of resin dot the surface of many of the leaflets. The fruit is 1/2 inch long, oval, yellow to orange in color, and hangs in loose clusters.