

# Poison Plant Identification



## Poison Ivy

*Toxicodendron radicans*

- Poison ivy grows in sun or shade.
- Woody shrub or a vine up to 6' tall (freestanding), or sprawling/climbing to 150' long.
- 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 between the leaves and woody twigs. The berrylike fruits are round and covered with a white, waxy coating.

## Poison Oak

*Toxicodendron pubescens*

- Poison oak is a low-growing, upright shrub up to 3' tall.
- 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*

- Poison sumac, a deciduous woody shrub or small tree that has a sparse, open form.
- Grows 5-20' tall.
- 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 ivy and hang in loose clusters of up to 10-12 inches in length.

All three 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.

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 be washed thoroughly and separately from other laundry.

Symptoms appear within 8-48 hours. Itching and burning of the skin may be followed by rash, redness, swelling, & watery blisters. The rash, once properly cleaned, can last for 2-5 weeks, but its not contagious and will not spread.

## Find More Info At:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep220> - Identifying Poison Ivy, Oak, & Sumac