

Poison Ivy

gizekwandagoons

Herbe à puce

Poison-ivy naturally occurs across much of North America.

In Ontario, it is found in forests, along trails, and in disturbed areas like roadsides and fields.

"Leaflets three, let it be":

Poison-ivy has a compound leaf which clusters three pointed leaflets. The middle one is longer and more pointed than the other two.

In spring and summer leaves are bright green. In fall, the leaves turn yellow, orange, or red. Poison-ivy also produces white or yellowish berries.

Many animals, including birds and small mammals, use poison-ivy for shelter. Its dense growth provides cover and protection.



Poison-ivy contains an oil compound called urushiol which can cause an itchy and painful rash on the skin. About 85% of people are allergic to urushiol.

Urushiol can stick to pets' fur and be transferred to humans. If pets roam in areas with poison-ivy, bathe them carefully. Wear gloves to avoid getting the oil on your skin.

Never burn poison-ivy, as the urushiol oil can be carried in the smoke and cause serious lung irritation or a rash if inhaled.

Mammals such as chipmunks and deer eat its leaves. Its seeds and berries are an important snack for songbirds in the late fall and early winter.

