

## Poison Ivy 毒藤 (或野葛) 須知

Common Name: Poison Ivy (毒藤)

Scientific Name: Toxicodendron radicans

Favorite Habitat: Woodland edge 樹林外圍

When exploring the woods and fields of the Great Plains, one plant that should definitely be avoided is Poison Ivy, and that can be a real challenge because it grows in **different forms, does not have a consistent leaf shape** and there are some plants in the same habitat that look like it! 各式各樣



Poison Ivy is a woody vine or sub-shrub that has a very wide distribution. It may be found coast to coast from southern Canada to Mexico. It is also known from the West Indies and China. It is a member of the Anacardiaceae, or Cashew, family. Most members of this plant family have a tropical or sub-tropical distribution. In North America, it is represented by the Sumacs (Rhus sp.), Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, Poison Sumac and the Florida Poison Tree (Metopium toxiferum). 到處都有



Poison Ivy has variable **leaves**:

Poison Ivy has compound leaves. That is, each leaf is made up of distinct parts, called leaflets. In this case there is **one leaflet at the end of the leaf stalk** (or petiole) and two leaflets opposite each other below the first. This is called a trifoliate pattern. The **two lower leaflets have very short stalks** and are often shaped like mittens, with a lobe on one side.

**The shape, color and texture of the leaflets is highly variable.**

These shown on the left have fairly smooth margins, but others may have rounded teeth or lobes.

三片葉的後兩片，莖很短，像拳擊手套，上半小、下半大

Here are some other ways to identify the poison ivy plant:

- It generally grows in a **cluster of low, weed-like plants** or a **woody vine which can climb trees** or fences.
- It is most often found in **moist areas**, such as riverbanks, woods, and pastures.
- **The edges of the leaves are generally smooth or have tiny "teeth."** Their color changes based on the season -- reddish in the spring; green in the summer; and yellow, orange, or red in the fall.
- Its **berries are typically white.** 像野草或樹藤，在濕處，葉邊光滑或有細齒，有小白果



Poison Ivy is often confused with another woody **vine**, Virginia Creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia). Notice how much bigger and lighter colored the tendrils of Virginia Creeper are compared to the aerial roots of Poison Ivy. Both the vines shown on the left are about as big around as your thumb, and were growing on the same tree.

比起其他藤蔓，毒藤的鬚較細、較短、色較深

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Virginia Creeper (OK to touch) **Poison Ivy (don't touch!)**

**The fruits** of Poison Ivy are grapelike clusters of tiny, white, pumpkin-like seeds with an off-white or pale yellow rind. The fruits also contain urushiol, but that does not stop the birds from eating them! Flickers and other woodpeckers are fond of them, along with sapsuckers, thrushes, pheasants and quail. The rind provides food to the birds while the seeds usually pass on through their gut unharmed and, in this way, birds are the agent for dispersal of Poison Ivy seeds.

勿碰有毒的淺黃果實，內有小白種子

Poison Ivy berries →



Poison Ivy grows in a number of different ways:



As a **ground cover** - It can creep across the ground surface and make a knee-high thicket of foliage. 地上爬



find vines as thick as your arm growing up the side of large trees. 樹上爬 愈高處愈大

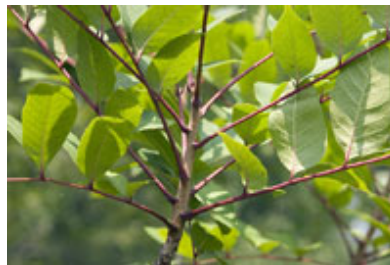
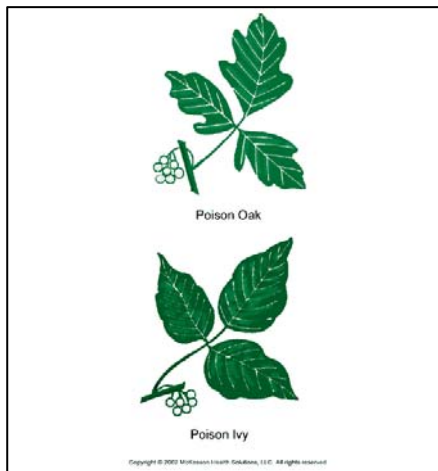
As a **vine** - Using thin, brown, aerial roots, it can attach itself to the side of a tree or other object and reach high into the sky. This is the form where it reaches its greatest size. It is not uncommon to



As a **skinny free-standing "shrub"** - It can grow in the open with one stem and only a few side branches. It may be up to ten feet tall in this form, and this is the form that people call **Poison Oak**.

獨自長一株，可高達六到十呎

Poison ivy's cousins, poison oak and poison sumac, each have their own unique appearance.



← Poison sumac 毒黃櫨 - 長在池沼邊  
**Poison sumac** mainly grows in moist, swampy areas in the **Northeast**, Midwest, and along the Mississippi River. It is a woody shrub made up of stems with rows of seven to thirteen smooth-edged leaflets.

**Poison oak** grows as a shrub (one to six feet tall). It is typically found along the West Coast and in the South, in dry areas such as fields, woodlands, and thickets. Like poison ivy, the leaves of poison oak are usually clustered in groups of three. They tend to be thick, green, and hairy on both sides.  
毒橡樹 - 葉厚、兩面有毛



Poison Ivy leaves turn a **vivid red color in the fall**. It is usually one of the **first plants to change**. This touch of beauty on the landscape is, perhaps, a small repayment for all the misery it causes!

秋天葉子最早變紅

## Poison Ivy 毒藤 (或野葛) 須知

Poison Ivy is a nuisance because it contains a chemical that can cause the **skin** of persons sensitive to it to develop a **red, itchy rash and even erupt in blisters**. Urushiol is the active ingredient in Poison Ivy that causes the rash and irritation. It is present in all parts of the plant, but particularly in the sap. People vary in their sensitivity to urushiol. Some have no problem with it and others experience severe allergic reactions. This can also vary over the life of a person. You might be unaffected as a child and become sensitized with repeated exposures. So even if you are not allergic now, it is a good idea to learn how to recognize Poison Ivy in case your body changes as you age.

皮膚紅、癢、起小水泡



The clinical name for the skin irritation caused by Poison Ivy is Rhus Dermatitis. It usually starts as itching and small blisters within a few hours after exposure. Depending on how strong the exposure was and/or how sensitive the person is, that may be all there is to it. However, it may develop into an inflamed, swollen rash with open, weeping sores that persists for up to two weeks. Severe cases may require a visit to the doctor.

**Urushiol is absorbed into the skin within three minutes of exposure. If it is washed off quickly with dishwashing soap and water, the consequences will be less**, but you are seldom close to a lavatory when you get exposed, so learning to recognize and avoid it is the best strategy. An important fact to remember is that the urushiol can travel on your clothes or the fur of your pets, so remember to wash them too if you suspect they were in contact with Poison Ivy.

沾上三分鐘之內，用洗碗精和水沖掉，會略好些。

### Treating Poison Ivy Exposures

十分鐘之內，用酒精擦、再用水沖、再用肥皂和溫水洗滌

If you are exposed, according to the FDA, you should quickly (**within 10 minutes**):

**First**, cleanse exposed areas with **rubbing alcohol**. Commercial products, like Zanol, Ivy Cleanse Towelettes, and Tecnu Extreme Poison Ivy Scrub, are also available over-the-counter, if you don't want to use rubbing alcohol.

**Next**, wash the exposed areas with **water only** (no soap yet, since soap can move the urushiol, which is the oil from the poison ivy that triggers the rash, around your body and actually make the reaction worse).

**Now**, take a **shower with soap and warm water**.

**Lastly**, **put gloves on and wipe everything** you had with you, including shoes, tools, and your clothes, with rubbing alcohol and water.

戴手套，把所有碰過的鞋襪、工具、衣物用酒精和水擦淨。

Unfortunately, if you wait more than 10 minutes, the urushiol will likely stay on your skin and trigger the poison ivy rash. The rash will usually clear on its own by 14-21 days. Treatment is directed at controlling the itching. **Oral antihistamines (like Benadryl)** may help the itch somewhat, but often do no more than make people drowsy. **Cortisone creams**, whether over-the-counter or by prescription, are only helpful if applied right away, before blisters appear, or much later, when the blisters have dried up. Compresses with cool water or Burow's solution (available without prescription) can help dry ooze faster. When the rash is severe, such as when it affects the face or causes extensive blistering, oral steroids (for example, prednisone) help produce rapid improvement. This course of therapy should be maintained, often in decreasing doses, for 10-14 days or even longer in some cases, to prevent having the rash rebound and become severe again.

吃 Benadryl 可略止癢。起水泡前、後，塗 Cortisone 也有用。冷水或 Burow's 液可讓水泡快乾。

大片水泡可服 prednisone 兩週，但用量要遞減。

Remember that poison ivy **isn't contagious** though, so touching the rash won't actually spread it. 不會傳染

If you go to the woods and fields a lot, having a **'poison ivy action kit'** ready, with **rubbing alcohol, a large bottle of water, and some soap**, might be a good idea. Since rubbing alcohol can be poisonous, children should be supervised with it though and it is not something you should send off into the woods with them.

隨身帶酒精、大瓶水和肥皂