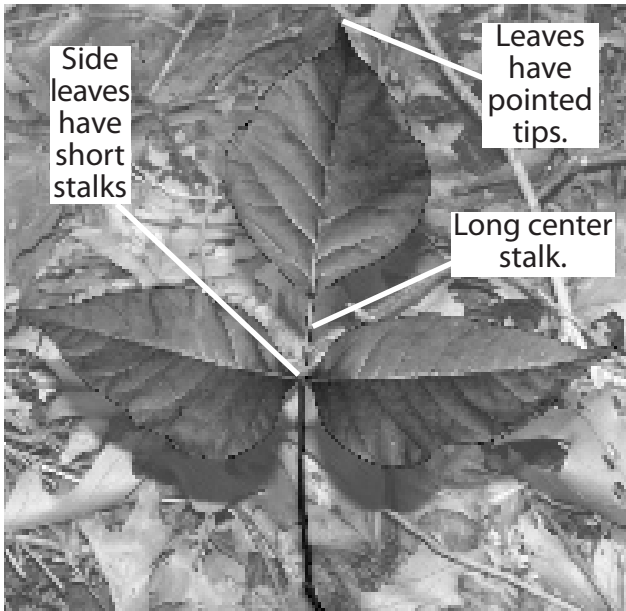


>>> Watch Out for Poisonous Plants! <<<

Check to make sure that the section of the forest you and your students are visiting is clear of poison ivy and poison sumac!

POISON IVY is found throughout New Hampshire in the open and in forests and thrives in disturbed areas. It takes three forms apparent to the observer:

- individual stalk
- climbing vine
- shrub-like



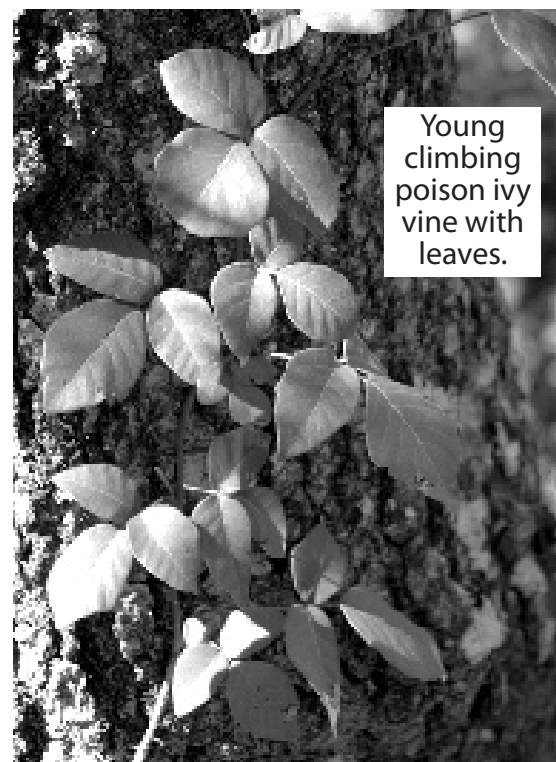
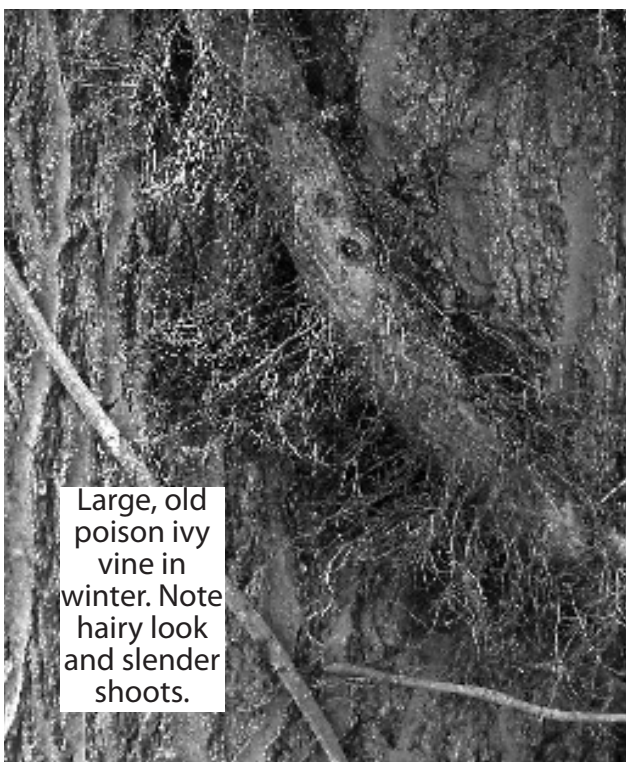
- In the warm months, poison ivy is identified by its compound leaves bearing three leaflets with smooth edges or a few coarse notches. The stalk of the end leaflet is noticeably longer than those of the side leaflets. The leaves are usually glossy.
- In the fall, the leaves turn red. The inconspicuous flowers become clusters of small grayish-white berries about 5 mm (3/16") in diameter.
- In the winter you can easily see leafless poison ivy vines clinging to tree trunks. Old vines are thick and hairy with slender woody shoots that sprout out from the vine.
- All parts of the plant contain poisonous sap at all times of the year. Contact with the oil may cause skin irritations and the oil remains virulent indefinitely.

POISON SUMAC is another plant that causes a painful rash after contact. It is more virulent than poison ivy and fortunately less common in New Hampshire. This shrub or small tree can be found in swamps and bogs in the southern part of the state.

For a gallery of photos to help you identify both poison ivy and poison sumac, go to:

<http://www.poison-ivy.org/index.htm>

<http://poisonivy.aesir.com/view>



Avoid touching poison ivy in all seasons. Even dead and dormant plants and roots have toxic oils that can cause painful rashes!

photo credit: www.poison-ivy.org