

# Pesky Plant Guide



Most plants we find outside can't hurt us if we touch them, but there are a few to watch out for as you explore outside. The Centers for Disease Control provides recommendations for what to do if you come in contact with poisonous plants here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/plants/symptoms.html>

## Poison Ivy



There's an old saying about poison ivy – “leaves of three, let it be!” Poison ivy can grow as an individual plant or a vine that climbs up the sides of trees. The leaves are oval-shaped and can sometimes be shiny, waxy, and reddish in color. An oil on the leaves, stem, and roots can irritate your skin and cause a painful and itchy rash.

## Wild parsnip



Watch out for wild parsnip growing along the edges of trails and roadsides, particularly on mowed edges. The sap inside wild parsnip contains an oil that can cause a blistering rash if it touches your skin and is exposed to sunlight. It can cause irritation any time of the year but is at its worst when the plant is flowering. Wild parsnip grows between 2-5 feet tall and has thick stems that look a little like celery. It has large, yellow, lacy flowers that look a little like Queen Anne's Lace. In its first year, the leaves are fern-like and grow in a round bunch around the base of the plant.

## Stinging Nettle



Stinging nettle is found in wet forested areas, also particularly along the edges of trails. It grows from 3-6 feet tall and has little green flowers in the summer. The leaves are spade shaped and have lots of little teeth. Little hairs on the plant can cause a burning sensation and a rash when they touch your skin.

