



Great Googly Moogly!

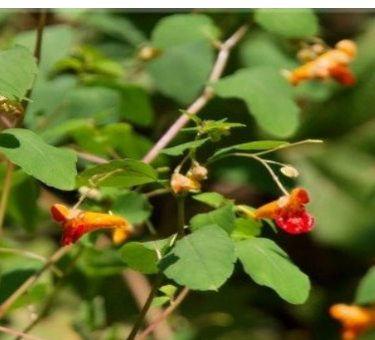
The invasion has begun! No, not the Aliens. It's worse than that, much worse. I'm speaking of Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) aka "Itchius unbearabus." The active ingredient in Poison Ivy is urushiol oil. In recent years the dread Ivy has emerged from its forest habitat and started to spread into turf and pastures. The consensus seems to point to increased carbon dioxide and an increase in temperature. Did you know that the 10 hottest years on record (on average) have occurred in the last 12 years?



Some facts about Poison Ivy:

- Only 1 nanogram (billionth of a gram) needed to cause rash.
- Average is 100 nanograms for most people.
- 1/4 ounce of urushiol is all that is needed to cause a rash in every person on earth.
- 500 people could itch from the amount covering the head of a pin.
- Specimens of urushiol several centuries old have found to cause dermatitis in sensitive people.
- 1 to 5 years is normal for urushiol oil to stay active on any surface including dead plants.
- Derived from **urushi**, Japanese name for lacquer.

Poison Ivy growing up your trees will eventually kill them. If you are brave enough to try and remove the plant physically simply pile it up in the woods out of your way or bury it. Alternatively you can bag the plants, roots and debris in plastic, then take to the dumpster or land fill. **NEVER BURN POISON IVY!!!** Burning vaporizes the oil which then mixes with the smoke. When breathed in it can cause symptoms ranging from acute asthma and breathing difficulties to **DEATH!** Your lungs can blister on the inside just like your body does on the outside.



There are many products on the market as well as various home cures that claim to kill or at least help with the rash. Problem is that what works for some does nothing for others. I don't have much problem with reactions to Poison Ivy but I have had good results using the sap of the Jewelweed plant. It usually grows near Poison Ivy and along stream banks. The active ingredient that counteracts the urushiol oil is currently unknown but it has been reported in studies that it provides dramatic relief in a majority of cases. Search the web for folks who make various Jewelweed remedies and keep some handy for your next yard clean-up.

I've included the picture to the right in case you think you're bad enough to withstand the powerful plant I have been yakking about. This poor woman was helping a friend trim some hedges. Unbeknownst to her the hedges were rife with poison ivy vines and she was scratching herself to boot, giving the oil easier access to penetrate her skin. It grows EVERYWHERE! So be aware and beware.



June Mountain Events

3 - 24 Pickin' in Horseshoe Bend Park, McCaysville. Every Thursday from 6:00 pm to dusk. Live music jams and pickin' on the banks of the Toccoa River. Free.

5 - National Trails Day, Chattahoochee National Forest, Blue Ridge Ranger District. All trail fees waived. For info or to volunteer for trail clean-up, call 706-745-6928.

5 - Family Fishing Festival, Chattahoochee National Fish Hatchery, Suches, GA. For ages 16 and under. Bring your own equipment and bait. 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Prizes, give-aways, games and refreshments. 706-838-4723

5 - 6 Georgia Wine Country Festival, Three Sisters Vineyard, Dahlonega. Ninth annual two day event celebrating the many resources of Georgia Wine Country. Wine tastings from Georgia wineries, live music, gourmet food, folk art, farm exhibits, live demonstrations and more. For more information, call 706-865-9463 or see the website www.threesistersvineyards.com

5 - 6 Outdoor Adventure Weekend, Amicalola Falls State Park. Events include a popular fishing rodeo and a celebration of National Trails Day with guided hikes. 706-265-1969

12 - 13 Blairsville Scottish Festival & Highland Games, Meeks Park, Blairsville. Top 20 Southeastern Tourism Event. 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. For more information call the Union County Chamber of Commerce @ 706-745-5789

12 - Annual Gala & Benefit Auction @ John C. Campbell Folk School. 828-837-2775 www.folkschool.org

22 - 5th Annual Taste of the Southern Highlands "A Mountain Tasting Experience"
Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds 706-896-4131 x1233 www.gafcp.org/fcnetwork.towns

25 - 26 Mountain Top Rodeo, R-Ranch in the Mountains, Dahlonega. World-class, competitive non-stop action with hilarious antics and much more. For information and directions see www.rranchga.com or call 706-864-6444

...a note from Cindy

It's time for celebration here in the mountains! The nasty yellow pollen is over! This means: we can breathe easier, the cars in the county are no longer ALL yellow, we can dine outside without the grit and we can now schedule our window cleaning. For all of you on our list we will be contacting you this coming week to schedule your window washing. For those of you considering having your windows washed, now is a great time. Give us a call for a quote. And to everyone - Enjoy the fresh mountain air!

Reminder: Now that the leaves are filling in it is a great time to look for those dead trees that are threatening to fall. We have had much rain of late and more for everyday this week. With soft wet soil and blowing winds downed trees are a certainty! Give us a call today! I hope your Memorial Day Weekend was safe and fun, we look forward to seeing you this summer.