

the ZANFEL ZONE

Your Information Resource for Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac

Volume 2, Issue 4

Merry Christmas and welcome to the Zanafel Zone! We'd like to say "Thank You" for your interest and support of Zanafel this year. Below are some articles that will help you to identify and prevent wintertime cases of poison ivy.

This issue continues the series featuring different Zanafel staff members. We'd like you to get to know us!

Julia Emert



Introducing Julia Emert, Administrative Assistant. She has been directing calls at Zanafel for about 8 years.

Julia is a proud wife and mother of a beautiful 10-month-old baby girl named Gracelynn. She loves to paint ceramics, bake, and go on family walks with their dog, Bailey. Her husband, Randy, is a musician; so music plays an important part in the Emert household. She also loves to throw football parties, Go Bears!

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Myth: It is safe to handle poison ivy, oak, and sumac plants in the winter.

Fact: In winter, exposure to the plants' vines, twigs, or roots can cause an allergic skin reaction (just as it would in the summer).

Identifying Poison Ivy In The Winter

In the spring, summer, and fall, "leaves of three, let it be" is a commonly used phrase to help identify poison ivy. How about in the winter when the leaves are gone?

One helpful phrase we've heard to help identify poison ivy and its relatives in the winter is "berries white, run in fright". Poison ivy, oak, and sumac all have white-ish berries, which can remain on the plants during the winter.



Another helpful phrase is "hairy vine, no friend of mine". Eastern poison ivy vines grow hair-like roots, which the plant uses to grasp the outside of trees. Vines with hairy looking roots are a danger for anyone who is trimming tree branches or collecting firewood. It's important to inspect for the presence of these vines if you purchase a fresh cut Christmas tree, or when handling firewood this winter.



Be sure to check for pieces of poison ivy vines that sometimes cling to firewood. The poison ivy toxin, urushiol, is stable at high temperatures and can be carried aloft by smoke particles from burning poison ivy, oak, and sumac. Breathing this smoke can cause severe/systemic cases of poison ivy and respiratory tract inflammation.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

We would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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