

# Weed of The Week

1-18-2021

## Poison Ivy (Toxicodendron radicans)

The winter weather is not alone on a list of things that will make your skin itch. This week's weed of the week could be considered the king of making you itch. Poison Ivy is a deciduous woody perennial native to North America but can be found throughout South America. Part of the cashew family this weed can be found growing in fence rows, woodlands, pasture fields, and even no-till crop fields. Poison Ivy prefers well drained soils high in calcium with little or no disturbance from tillage. Reproduction occurs mostly from seed that can be consumed and disbursed across the landscape by birds and other wildlife. Poison Ivy does have rhizomes or below ground modified stems. One of the most unique features that Poison Ivy shares is the aerial roots that attach to other plants or structures aiding in its spread and collection of sunlight, these aerial roots have a hair like feature. Another feature of Poison Ivy is the trifoliate leaf structure. A good word of wisdom: if it is hairy and has 3 leaves, LEAVE IT ALONE. Every part of the poison Ivy plant is poisonous, containing oil that is released when the plant is bruised. This oil will cause severe dermatitis. For those who burn wood in the house, be aware that burning Poison Ivy can cause severe irritation to your lungs. There is no known toxicity to livestock or pets, but they can transfer the oil to humans. Methods of control can be mechanical, cultural, and chemical. Removing the plant by hand can be successful (just use gloves). Livestock such as goats, love eating Poison Ivy and can be very beneficial to overall control. Herbicides such as Glyphosate, 2-4-D, and Triclopyre are very effective in controlling Poison Ivy.

