

Let goats clear out the poison-ivy

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Goats eat the leaves with relish; bees make honey from its flowers that is safe for human consumption, and birds gobble up its fruit without harm in late summer. But to 70 percent of the people who come in contact with any part of the plant that has been bruised or broken, poison-ivy is anathema — an evil curse.

While poison-ivy can inflict its itchy skin rash and possible water blisters on the human body at any time of year, its presence is most noticed during summer months when the plant is leafed out, and unwary wanderers in wooded areas are apt to be wearing short sleeves, short pants and no gloves.

To professional woodsmen like John F. Kundt, Extension forestry specialist and horticulture department faculty member at the University of Maryland, poison-ivy is an occupational hazard.

Even in hot weather, Kundt says he never cruises timber without a long-sleeved shirt and full-length trousers if he thinks there is the slightest possibility of poison-ivy contact.

Even so, he keeps a watchful eye and tries to avoid heavy infestations of the dreaded plant. His motto is: "Leaflets three, let it be." Another telltale sign is that poison-ivy leaves are usually shiny green in the summertime.

The College Park specialist has his favorite methods of emergency treatment if he has accidentally brushed against poison-ivy. Out in the woods, he rubs the juice from crushed jewelweed on the spot where itchiness is starting to occur.

As soon as he can get to "civilization," he rinses the exposed skin area with rubbing alcohol. This is followed by liberal washing with warm water and a strong (alkali) soap. Clothes which have brushed against poison-ivy should be laundered separately from other clothing before they are worn again.

Dry-cleaning fluids will do a good job removing the poisonous oil from poison-ivy contaminated clothing. But warn your dry-cleaner of the facts, so that his workers can take precautions to avoid poison-ivy rashes.

According to information from a trio of U.S. Department of Agriculture and land-grant college leaflets, there are three peculiar sidelights on poison-ivy which may not be known by the average person:

— Most people do not suffer ill-effects from their first contact with poison-ivy. In fact, some persons can make repeated contacts with the plant over much of a lifetime without harm. But 70 percent of those who have made contact eventually fall victim to its poisonous oil. And they will remain susceptible for the rest of their lives.

— Urushiol, a phenolic compound used by the Orientals in making lacquerware, is a poisonous oil from the lacquer tree of China and Japan. And it is the same poisonous compound found in poison-ivy. Thus, persons who are especially sensitive to poison-ivy can also develop rashes from handling lacquerware.

— Finally, poison-ivy is not an ivy at all. It got that name from the first settlers in the Virginia colony because the English ivy of their native land was the only plant they knew which bore any resemblance. Thus, plant scientists today insist that the word be spelled as a compound word— poison-ivy or poisonivy — to avoid any connotation that common ivy is poisonous. The same philosophy holds true for poison-oak, a first cousin of poison-ivy in every respect.

If you own a wooded lot which is infested with poison-ivy, you could put a fence around it and turn in some goats to devour the vine pest.

Or you could put on leather gloves and protective clothing to grub out the spreading monster, roots and all. This is best done in early spring.

Finally, you can try chemical control with an approved herbicide. Extension agronomy specialists at the University of Maryland recommend 2, 4-D, amitrol (Amitrol-T), dicamba (Banvel), or glyphosate (Roundup). Amitrol will probably work best for homeowners.

Keep in mind that Roundup is non-selective; i.e., it will kill everything. However, the other chemicals listed give selective control of poison-ivy and other broadleaf plants.

While June and July are the most effective time of year for controlling poison-ivy with herbicides, Thomas R. Turner, Extension turfgrass management specialist at College Park, recommends waiting until late August — or when average daily high temperatures are below 85 degrees F. This precaution applies to the

selective herbicides when there are lawn areas adjacent to the poison-ivy being treated.

Keep in mind, too, that some herbicides work best in a sunny exposure. Since most poison-ivy is found in shady areas, you may have to make a second application about 30 days after the initial spraying. Keep a wary eye out in subsequent years for poison-ivy regrowth and seedlings. The seedlings are most apt to crop up along fencerows and other places where birds roost.

For further information on controlling poison-ivy, contact

your local office of the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service. There's one in every county and in Baltimore

city. Look in your telephone directory listings under county (or Baltimore City) government.

Colt offered as prize

BALTIMORE, Md. — A Baltimore county 4-H Club member will be the recipient of a top quality quarter horse colt this fall, following a challenging essay contest. The colt has been given to the Baltimore County 4-H Program by Lamar Naylor, of Maple Spring Farm, near Monkton.

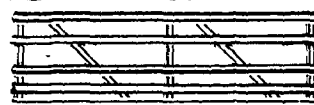
While the contest is open to all Baltimore County 4-H Club members, strict guidelines have been drawn to make sure the colt is properly sheltered and taken care of. The author of the top essay will surely have something to remember for years.

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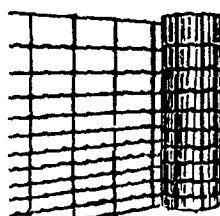
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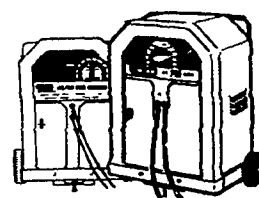
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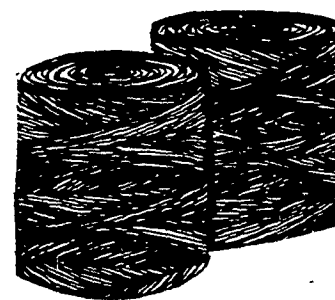
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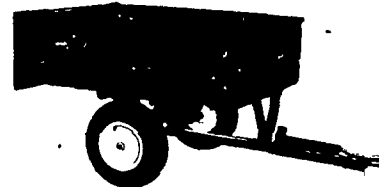
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