

# Poison Ivy Recommendations: Digging

Poison ivy can be controlled by grubbing (digging) out the roots and stems using hand tools. After poison ivy removal, work the soil frequently to reduce the ability of the plant to produce shoots. This will eventually eliminate poison ivy because the plant does not regenerate easily from plant fragments.

Some small ground vines have surface roots that run just under the leaf litter which are easy to remove. Vines that are wrapped around wire fences and stone walls are more difficult to remove. For older vine roots, digging with a shovel may be necessary for removal. Soaking the soil prior to pulling the roots may make it easier to remove the large poison ivy roots.

Beware of the plant sap that is released whenever you tear the leaves, vines, and roots. **Do not use** a weed-wacker device or lawn mower, which will pulverize the plant and spray the sap.

**Do not burn poison ivy.** Burning the leaves and stems releases the poison in the form of tiny droplets on particles of ash and dust in the smoke and can cause a severe reaction on exposed skin and in the breathing passages. **Dispose** of poison ivy by composting or by placing in a garbage bag. Make sure that bags containing poison ivy are sealed, well identified, and disposed of with household garbage.

To rehabilitate the area following poison ivy control, plant native species in the disturbed soil to prevent re-infestation.

## CAUTION

Poison ivy contains a poisonous substance in the sap which causes an irritating inflammation of the skin which develops blister and is accompanied by intense itchiness.

**Always wear protective clothing when controlling poison ivy.** When controlling poison ivy wear long pants, long sleeve shirts, rubber boots and thick rubberized gloves (preferably not latex as they are not a perfect barrier against the plant's oil). If there is a potential for sap to come in contact with your eyes, wear safety goggles. Following poison ivy control, rinse tools off thoroughly with cold water from a garden hose. When removing clothing take care not to touch anything that may contain sap. Wash clothing thoroughly.