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Virginia Creeper Vine



The Poison Ivy has leaves of three, whereas the Virginia Creeper has a set of five.

Leave of Five... Leave it Be?

Do you recognize this plant? If you said Poison Ivy, you are close but no cigar. This plant is actually called Virginia Creeper. We often see it clinging to a telephone pole, trunk of a tree, or slinking along the ground as an under-story plant. Perhaps you were taught the old adage of "Leaves of three, let it be; Leaves of five, let it thrive." We want to warn you that this may not be as true as we once believed.

We have had two staff members break out from this plant. The first staff member ended up with a spot the size of an apple on her leg. Her rash was very similar to a Poison Ivy; raised and oil filled bumps. The second staff member's was a bit more extreme. He was doing tree work, and the sweat moved the oils throughout his skin eventually covering 60% of his body. Although his rash wasn't oil filled as the Poison Ivy rash often is, but equally as itching and irritating.

Similar to Poison Ivy, not everyone will breakout from the exposure to the oils. It is thought that even less people are sensitive to the oils of the Virginia Creeper. All the same, keep your eyes open and be vigilant when working in timber areas.

If you do come in contact with this plant, immediately wash your skin with a strong dish soap to remove the oils. Urushiol, the oil in Poison Ivy, can remain active on clothing and other items for many months. Use rubbing alcohol to dilute any residual oils on tools, door handles, and faucets.

Would You Dare?



Succulents glued to acrylic nails



Image Credit: Cecelia Moeller



Note the beautifully green eyebrows ;)

Do you view yourself as trendy? How about self proclaimed plant fanatic? If you are both, the newest anticipated trends are here for you to try.

"Succy nails" are real succulents that have been glued using florist glue to an acrylic nail and then added to your real nail.

A flower beard has been around since the 70's, but with the music festival scene growing the men wanted to be able to enjoy nature as much as their female counterparts. The final green trend is the flower eyebrow. The trend features whimsical garden-themed accents fit for a fairy, including tiny flowers and butterfly stickers intricately placed on and around the brows.

I asked a few people around the garden center if they were trendy enough to give these options a go. The overwhelming answer, "Hard pass!" Hopefully this article at least got as a good of a chuckle out of you as it did us.

Trends: http://grow.gardenmediagroup.com/2020garden-trends-sneak-peek

Ash Tree Replacement

It is sad but true Emerald Ash Borer, EAB, is a serious problem here in Iowa. EAB is on the rise and replacement trees are needed. If you lose your Ash, here are some of my favorite substitute trees if you lose your Ash tree.

Wildfire Black Gum – Zone 5a to 8b (Pro: Moderate growth rate and outstanding crimson fall color, Con: May have issues in extreme winter cold)

Hackberry – Zone 2 to 7 (Pro: Very adaptable to punishing conditions including drought and wind, Con: Not much for fall color, not an overly showy tree) Kentucky Coffeetree – Zone 4 to 8 (Pro: Wonderfully adaptable to many conditions such as alkaline soil, salt, and drought, Con: Large seed pods on the native variety can be viewed as messy. Watch for seedless varieties such as 'Decaf', 'Espresso', and 'True North')

Yellowwood – Zone 4 to 8 (Pro: A well rounds native tree as the tree matures creamy white flowers bloom in the spring, Con: Can be damaged in ice storms)

Autumn Gold Ginkgo – Zone 4 to 8 (Pro: Beautiful yellow fall color and fruitless male cultivar)

Spaeth's Alder – Zone 4 to 7 (Pro: Fast growing tree with glorious glossy leaves in the summer, Con: Lack of fall color and Japanese beetles tend to enjoy munching on this one)

Autumn Blaze Pear – Zone 4 to 8 (Pro: White flowers in the spring and lovely reddish fall color, Con: Weak wooded and short lived)

Majestic Skies Northern Pin Oak – Zone 3 to 6 (Pro: Fast growing Oak tree with excellent red fall color)

You probably noticed we didn't have any Maples on our list. They are a fantastic family, but highly used. As a nursery, we want to promote diversity to prevent problems such as this again.



Autumn Gold Gingko



Majestic Skies Oak firsteditionsplants.com



Yellowwood



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