

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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Description for Fig. 3, *Arisaema Tri-
phyllum* (inside) is incorrect. Should
read: Native herb of woodlands with
a distinctive large bract arching over
the fleshy spike, leaves with three
leaflets.



21 COMMON POISONOUS PLANTS

Photos courtesy of John Kallas, Instructor — Wild Food Plants, MSU Lifelong Education

1. *ACTAEA PACHYPODA*



common names: baneberry, cohosh, coralberry, necklace-weed, snakeberry.

Native herb of woodlands, with small white flowers in a short, thick, terminal cluster, fruit is either red (*Actaea rubra*) on slender stalks, or white (*Actaea pachypoda*) on thickened stalks, leaves have many sharply toothed leaflets.

harmful portions: roots and fruits most harmful, otherwise all parts.



2. *ACTAEA RUBRA*

common names: celandine, rock poppy.

harmful portions: leaves and seeds.

Naturalized herb of woods and waste places in rich damp soil, with small yellow-orange flowers, leaves are pinnately divided, juice or sap is bright yellow, fruit dry, opening from the bottom upward, seeds with a crest.

5. *CHELIDONIUM MAJUS*



common names: spotted cowbane, spotted water hemlock, water hemlock.

harmful portions: ROOTS ARE DEADLY, as well as aboveground parts.

Native herb of wet places, with very small white flowers in a flat-topped cluster, leaves with many sharply-toothed leaflets, a cluster of fleshy finger-like roots, smelling like parsnips.

6. *CICUTA*



common names: Kentucky coffee tree.

harmful portions: legume with the pulp between the seeds.

Native tree of rich woods, flood plains, with rough bark and leaves twice divided into leaflets, fruit a heavy flat legume, with flat seeds surrounded by pulp.

10. *GYMNOCLADUS DIOICA*



11. *MENISPERMUM CANADENSE*



common name: yellow pimpernel

harmful portions:

Native climber of woods and open lands and open places, conspicuous, 3-7 rounded and fleshy with seed (see figure) mummified vine is harmless grass, see figure for the fruit and seed and Menispermum displayed on

3. *ARISAEMA TRIPHYLLUM*



common names: blue cohosh,
papoose root.

harmful portions: leaves and the
blue seeds.

Native herb of woodlands, with
small greenish-yellow flowers and
bright blue seeds which resemble
berries, leaves with the leaflets
2-3 lobed.



4. *CAULOPHYLLUM
THALICTROIDES*

7. *CONIUM MACULATUM*



common names: poison fool's
parsley, poison hemlock.

harmful portions: SEEDS,
ROOTS, and LEAVES ARE
DEADLY.

Naturalized herb of waste places,
with spotted stems, small white
flowers and large leaves with
numerous leaflets; this species
lacks the cluster of fleshy roots
that *Cicuta maculata* has, but
otherwise is very similar.

8. *CONIUM MACULATUM*



9. *DATURA STRAMONIUM*



common names: Jimson weed,
stramonium, thorn apple.

harmful portions: all parts, but
particularly the seeds and the
leaves, DEADLY in relatively
small quantities.

Naturalized large, weedy herb of
cultivated fields and waste places,
flower large, funnel-shaped and
white, blooming throughout the
growing season, fruit a prickly,
rounded capsule with large flat
seeds.

12. *VITIS/MENISPERMUM*



common names: inkberry,
pigeonberry, poke, pokeberry,
pokeweed.

harmful portions: roots are most
harmful, followed by leaves,
stem and fruit.

Native tall herb of roadsides and
low ground, with purple stems,
flowers in a long cluster, fruit a
dark-purple berry with crimson

13. *PHYTOLACCA AMERICANA*



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common names: mandrake, may-apple.

harmful portions: rhizomes, roots, stem, flower, leaves, and unripened fruit.

Native herb of woodlands with umbrella-like leaves and creamy white flowers beneath, fruit is a large fleshy berry, eventually turning yellow by fall, with thick fibrous roots and creeping rhizomes.



14. *PODOPHYLLUM PELTATUM*

15. *SAMBUCUS CANADENSIS*



common
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fruit a
orange-r
purplish

18. *SOLANUM DULCAMARA*



common names: bittersweet, red nightshade.

harmful portions: unripened fruit most harmful, otherwise all parts.

Naturalized climbing or leaning vine of thickets or near settlements, woody at the base with simple leaves which sometimes have a pair of lobes at the base, flowers purple or occasionally white, fruit a red berry resembling a small tomato.

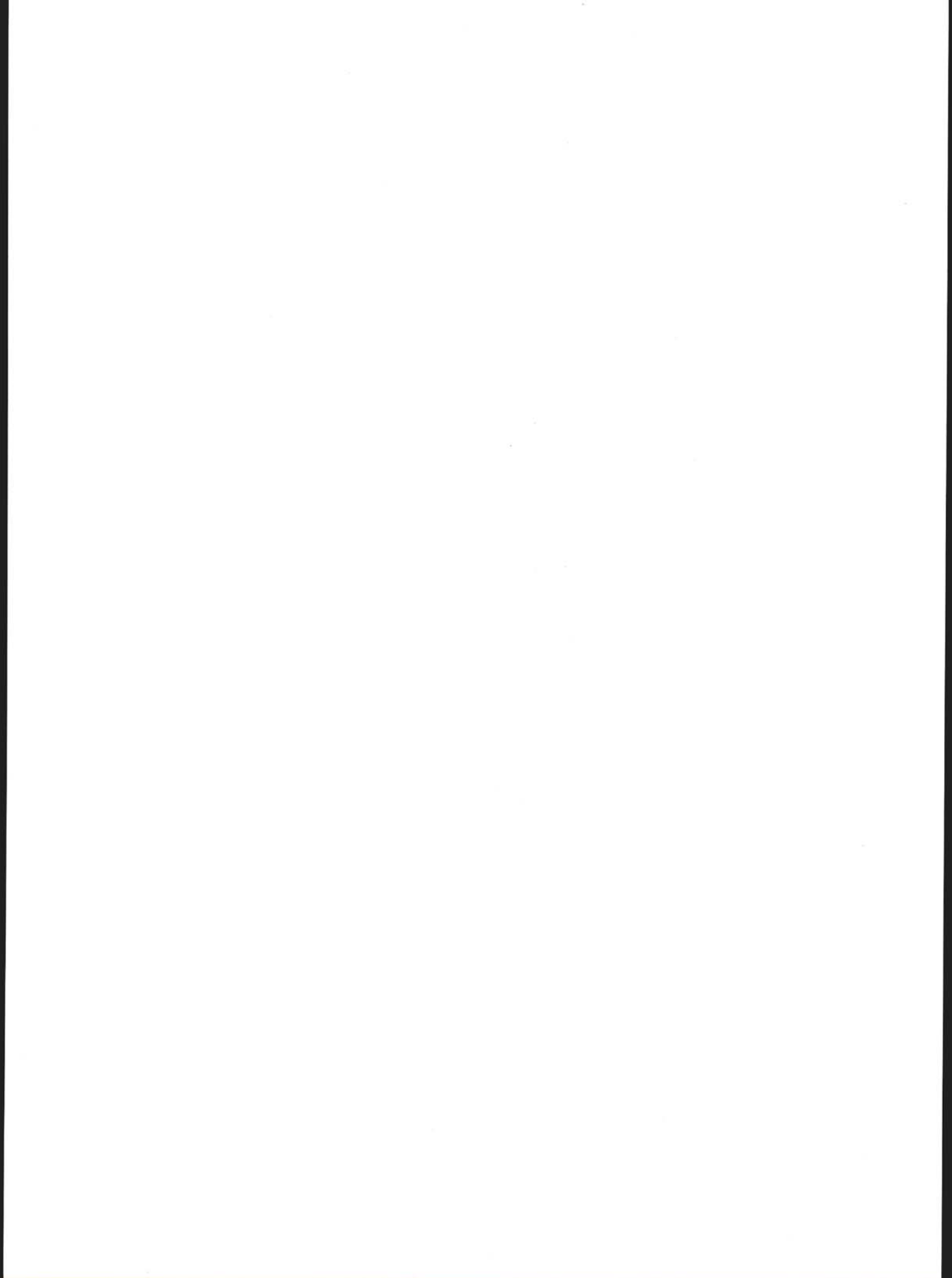
19. *SOLANUM DULCAMARA*



common
black-
harmful
most
parts.
Natural
places
similar
fruit a c

NOTE: This chart is designed merely as an aid in identifying some common native and naturalized plants which have been reported as internally harmful or poisonous to humans when ingested. It is NOT intended that it be all inclusive of any wild plant that may be poisonous in the northeastern U.S., neither does it imply that there are not other harmful or poisonous plants which one may encounter outdoors or indoors. Treatment should be referred to a physician.

21 common
poison



16. *SAMBUCUS PUBENS*



17. *SOLANUM CAROLINENSE*

common names: ball nettle, horse nettle.

harmful portions: unripened fruit most harmful, otherwise all parts.

Native prickly weedy herb of sandy areas and waste places, flower purple or white, fruit a yellow berry, leaves coarsely toothed.

20. *SOLANUM NIGRUM*



common names: yew, ground hemlock.

harmful portions: foliage, bark, and seeds.

Native, and naturalized evergreen shrubs and trees with flat needle-like leaves, and red, fleshy arils surrounding the seeds.

21. *TAXUS spp.*



COMMON

US PLANTS

