

English ivy

Hedera helix

Description

Introduced to North America as an ornamental for ground cover. Compounds in English ivy are somewhat toxic and include glycosides that cause vomiting, diarrhea, nervous conditions and dermatitis in sensitive individuals.

Habit

Evergreen, climbs up to 90 ft by clinging aerial roots and trailing to form dense ground cover. Vines attach to the bark of trees, brickwork, and other surfaces by way of numerous, small root like structures, exuding a glue like substance.

Leaves

3-lobed, heart-shaped, dark green in color, waxy, somewhat leathery, and arranged alternately along the stem.

Stems

Slender, light green but later turning light brown with aerial rootlets.





Flowers

Perfect, small, greenish white in color, found in round clusters, appearing in the fall.

Fruits and Seeds

Spring maturing, black in color with a fleshy outer covering, stone-like seeds, about 0.25 in. in diameter, poisonous.

Habitat

Native to Europe, western Asia, and northern Africa. Found in open forests, forest edges, fields, hedgerows, coastal areas, salt marsh edges, and other upland areas especially where some soil moisture is present.

Reproduction

Vegetatively by root cuttings.

Similar

Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*); Boston ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*).

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Pull up vines on the ground by hand then bag and dispose of plants; cut vines climbing on tree. Effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as triclopyr. Follow label and state requirements.

Credits

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