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**MontGuide**

# Poisonous Plants in the Home Landscape

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The list of selected landscape plants with known toxicity tells which part is poisonous and whether people are affected through contact or ingestion.

YARD AND GARDEN

MT199902AG Revised 12/19

**MOST PEOPLE KNOW ENOUGH NOT TO TOUCH OR** eat poison ivy. Most ranchers understand that death camas, water hemlock, white loco and some other range plants can cause serious loss of livestock when grazed.

But how many Montana homeowners know that some common ornamentals can cause serious illness or even death if ingested? This discussion is not meant to frighten but to inform and will be particularly helpful in households where small children are allowed to roam freely over the property. Most toxic ornamentals are beautiful plants that deserve a place in the landscape. They also deserve respect. Understand what they can do if misused; then enjoy their beauty throughout the year.

The following plant list is not all-inclusive. New cultivars of some plants may be developed that are less (or more) toxic than the parent species. Some people may develop an allergic reaction to plants that are harmless to most other

people. For example, some people go into shock after eating peanuts. Further, the effects of poisonous plants range from slight skin irritation to illness or death. What will actually happen depends upon the inherent toxicity of the plant, the parts contacted or ingested (leaves, stems, fruit, bark), the time of year, stage of growth, the amount of material with which the person has come into contact and the age, weight and sensitivity of that person.

If someone has ingested a poisonous plant, keep him or her calm and warm. Call the **Montana Poison Center** at 1-800-222-1222 and take a specimen of the suspect plant material with you to the hospital.

Many range plants not commonly found around the home landscape are also toxic. See MSU Extension Bulletin 122, *Range Plants of Montana*, for more information on toxic range plants.



Daffodil (*Narcissus* spp.)  
BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



Larkspur (*Delphinium* spp.)  
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Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra* spp.)  
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### Plant Parts that are Toxic *if Ingested*

Any Part	Fruits, berries	Seeds	Leaves	Roots, bulbs, rhizomes
Azaleas ( <i>Rhododendron</i> spp.)	Buckthorn ( <i>Rhamnus</i> spp. [syn. <i>Frangula</i> ])	Black locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> )	Boxwood, common ( <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> )	Columbine ( <i>Aquilegia</i> spp.)
Bittersweet ( <i>Celastrus scandens</i> )	Cherry, ground ( <i>Physalis</i> spp.) (unripe)	Buckeye ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	Buckeye ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	Comfrey ( <i>Symphytum</i> spp.)
Bleeding heart ( <i>Dicentra</i> spp.)	English ivy ( <i>Hedera helix</i> )	Burning bush ( <i>Euonymus</i> spp.)	Cherry ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Crocus, autumn ( <i>Colchicum autumnale</i> )
Christmas rose ( <i>Helleborus niger</i> )	Ginkgo ( <i>Ginkgo biloba</i> )	Cherry ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Cherry, ground ( <i>Physalis</i> spp.)	Daffodil; Jonquil ( <i>Narcissus</i> spp.)
Dutchman's breeches ( <i>Dicentra cucullaria</i> )	Golden chain tree ( <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> )	Four o'clocks ( <i>Mirabilis</i> spp.)	Comfrey ( <i>Symphytum</i> spp.)	Four o'clocks ( <i>Mirabilis</i> spp.)
Elderberry ( <i>Sambucus</i> spp.) <sup>1</sup>	Juniper ( <i>Juniperus communis</i> , <i>J. virginiana</i> )	Foxglove ( <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> )	English ivy ( <i>Hedera helix</i> )	Hyacinth ( <i>Hyacinthus</i> spp.)
Horsetail ( <i>Equisetum</i> spp.)	Mock orange ( <i>Philadelphus</i> spp.)	Horse chestnut ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	Foxglove ( <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> )	Iris ( <i>Iris</i> spp.)
Larkspur ( <i>Delphinium</i> spp.)	Nightshade ( <i>Solanum</i> spp.)	Larkspur ( <i>Delphinium</i> spp.)	Horse chestnut ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	
Laurel ( <i>Kalmia</i> spp.)	Potato, Irish ( <i>Solanum tuberosum</i> )	Morning glory ( <i>Ipomoea</i> spp.)	Horseradish ( <i>Armoracia rusticana</i> )	
Lily of the valley ( <i>Convallaria majalis</i> )	Virginia creeper ( <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i> )	Peas, sweet ( <i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> )	Hydrangea ( <i>Hydrangea</i> spp.)	
Lupine ( <i>Lupinus</i> spp.)	Yew ( <i>Taxus</i> spp.)	Plums ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Plums ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	
Rhododendron ( <i>Rhododendron</i> spp.)		Privet ( <i>Ligustrum</i> spp.)	Rhubarb ( <i>Rheum rhabarbarum</i> )	
Scotch broom ( <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> )		Wisteria ( <i>Wisteria</i> spp.)	Tansy ( <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i> )	
Wormwood ( <i>Artemisia</i> spp.)			Tobacco ( <i>Nicotiana</i> spp.)	
			Tomato ( <i>Solanum lycopersicon</i> )	
			Yew ( <i>Taxus</i> spp.)	
Twigs	Flowers	Bark	Misc	
Black locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> )	Buckeye ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	Black locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> )	Sprouts - Black locust ( <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> )	
Boxwood, common ( <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> )	Crocus, autumn ( <i>Colchicum autumnale</i> )	Buckthorn ( <i>Rhamnus</i> spp. [syn. <i>Frangula</i> ])	Buds - Hydrangea ( <i>Hydrangea</i> spp.)	
	Foxglove ( <i>Digitalis purpurea</i> )	Cherry ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Nuts - Acorn ( <i>Quercus</i> spp.)	
	Horse chestnut ( <i>Aesculus</i> spp.)	Hydrangea ( <i>Hydrangea</i> spp.)	Green portion - Potato, Irish ( <i>Solanum tuberosum</i> )	
	Hydrangea ( <i>Hydrangea</i> spp.)	Plums ( <i>Prunus</i> spp.)	Pods - Wisteria ( <i>Wisteria</i> spp.)	
	Peas, sweet ( <i>Lathyrus odoratus</i> )			
	Tansy ( <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i> )			

<sup>1</sup>According to the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, raw or unripe elderberries contain toxic compounds and must be cooked sufficiently to avoid risk of cyanide toxicity.

Plant Parts with **Contact Toxicity**

Any Part	Fruits	Seeds	Leaves
Anemone ( <i>Anemone patens</i> )	Juniper ( <i>Juniperus communis</i> , <i>J. virginiana</i> )	Castor beans ( <i>Ricinus communis</i> )	Castor beans ( <i>Ricinus communis</i> )
Buttercup ( <i>Ranunculus</i> spp.)		Pasque flower ( <i>Anemone</i> spp.)	Clematis ( <i>Clematis</i> spp.)
Daphne ( <i>Daphne</i> spp.)			
Milkweed ( <i>Asclepias</i> spp.)			
Poison ivy ( <i>Toxicodendron</i> spp.)			
Snow on the mountain ( <i>Euphorbia marginata</i> )			
Spurge ( <i>Euphorbia</i> spp.)			
Trumpet vine ( <i>Campsis radicans</i> )			



Clematis (*Clematis* spp.) BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



Iris (*Iris* spp.) BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



Burning Bush (*Euonymus* spp.) BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



Rhubarb (*Rheum rhabarbarum*) BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



Morning Glory (*Ipomoea* spp.) BY CHERYL MOORE-GOUGH



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