

Watch Out for These!

Los Padres National Forest



Poison Oak

Poison Oak is found in many areas of the National Forest. You may encounter it along trails and even in campgrounds and picnic areas. The oil in poison oak, which is present on both leaves and stems, can cause a painful itching rash. Your best protection is to know what the plant looks like and avoid contact.



Poison Oak *Taxicodendron diversitocum*

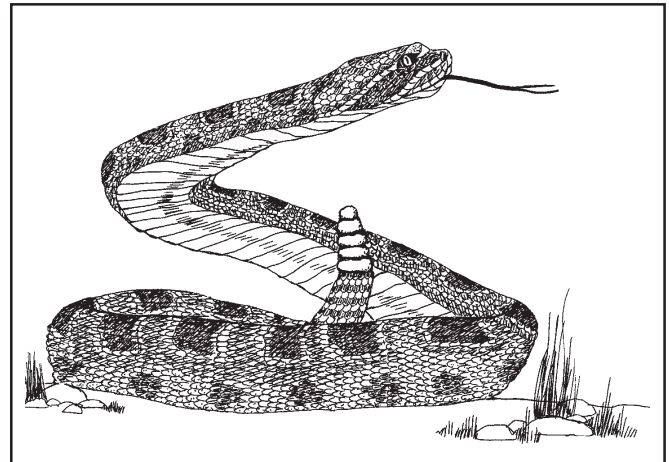
- Three-lobed, shiny leaves
- Shrub or vine form
- Bright green in the spring
- Bright red or maroon in the fall
- No leaves in the winter

If you do touch poison oak, you can reduce the chance of developing a rash by washing the exposed skin immediately in cold water. Poison oak oil can be absorbed easily by clothing, so we suggest washing your clothes at in warm soapy water if you come in contact with poison oak.

Rattlesnakes

Rattlesnakes are shy creatures and like to keep to themselves. While they are rarely seen in campgrounds or other developed sites you may spot one along a trail. Give rattlesnakes a wide berth; if cornered or surprised they may strike. Be especially careful when walking through heavy brush or near down logs and rocks. Watch where you put your feet and hands.

Rattlesnakes are the only poisonous snakes in this area. Other non-poisonous snakes you may see include gopher snakes, garter snakes and king snakes.



Western Rattlesnake *Crotalus viridis*

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