POISONOUS AND DEADLY
FAMILIAR PLANTS THAT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO HARM.
IGC TALK – BY PAULA CRAGG

The Poison Control Center (Centre Antipoison)
covering the Dordogne/Charente department
is located at the CHU DE BORDEAUX
Phone Number: 05 56 96 40 80
(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

1.TAXUS - COMMON YEW
Taxine Alkaloides - Severe arrhythmias. No known antidote but use charcoal to decontaminate.
Yew wood is used for making bows and arrows were dipped in poison made from yew seeds.
The Arils, red fruit are not toxic but the large seed inside contains alkaloids, taxine B.

2. ACONITUM - Monkshood or Wolfsbane
Aconitine alkaloids - burning lips, tongue throat. Severe nausea, vomiting, weakness, dizziness, muscle paralysis and cardiac arrest - within minutes.
No known antidote! Handle with gloves as the most toxic part are the roots and tubers especially.

3. ARUM MACULATUM - Lords and Ladies, Cuckoo Pint or Jack in the Pulpit.
Calcium Oxalate crystals that are needle sharp like stinging nettles - redness, swelling and intense irritation with localized blisters.
Wash with cool water, use antihistamine cream. Do not touch eyes or mouth or shred. Mistaken by foragers for *wild garlic* as likes to grow in cool damp shade.
ARUM LILY ZANTEDESCHIA AETHIOPICA also known as the Funeral lily - toxic, invasive nature kills surrounding plant life. Wear gloves when arranging and the water in the vase will kill other plant matter.

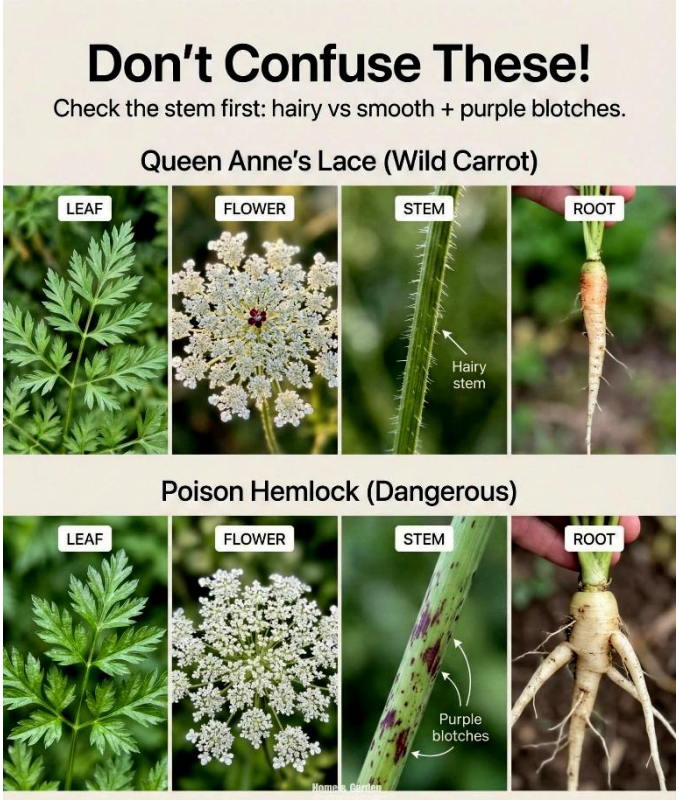
4. ATROPA BELLADONNA - Deadly Nightshade
A climber of 1.5 meters, shiny black sweet tasting berries dangerous for children.
Tropane alkaloides - dry mouth, blurred vision, raised heart rate, confusion and hallucinations and potential death - contact poisons centre.

5. BRUGMANSIA - Angels Trumpet
Scopolamine, hyoscyamine and atropine. Causes dry mouth, blurred vision leading to coma and death. ***Contact poisons centre***.
Touching sap and eyes severe pupil enlargement and temporary blindness. Inhalation, evenings, headaches, dizziness and nausea.
Handle with gloves and caution.

6. COLCHICUM AUTUMNALE - Autumn Crocus
Toxic **alkaloides** causes severe vomiting, diarrhea, organ failure and death.

7. CONVALLARIA MAJALIS - Lily of the Valley
Cardiac glycosides and odorant bourgeonal.
Smelling does not harm, but all parts are toxic including the water in the vase.
***Antidote is available at the poisons centre*.**

8. CONIUM MACULATUM - Hemlock
Part of the carrot family - highly toxic - **neurotoxic alkaloides** - no antidote.
***Contact poisons centre immediately*.**



Difference between Hemlock and wild carrot/Queen Anne's Lace - the queen has hairy legs! Leaves like carrot tops and pleasant aroma. Hemlock smells of mouse urine, has pure white flowers and leaves are broadly triangular, very large and fern like.

9. DAPHNE MEZEREUM - Daphne - small shrub with fragrant flowers in early spring, delightful near a path, excellent for pollinators but all parts are toxic to humans, cats, dogs and livestock, especially the berries but not apparently to birds.
Glycosides - The sap causes dermatitis, if eaten severe gastrointestinal problems, kidney failure and death for young children and pets.
Wear protective gloves. ***Contact a poison centre or vets***.

10. DATURA STRAMONIUM - Jimsonweed/thornapple.
Solanaceae - nightshade family.
Atropine, scopolamine and hyoscyamine - block central nervous system causing thirst, blurred vision, confusion, hallucination and death.
Pull plant immediately using gloves. Do not compost. Seeds can survive for ten years in soil.

11. DIGITALIS PURPUREA - foxglove.
Cardiac glycosides.
Digitalis and digoxin. Slows and steadies heart rate - manages atrial fibrillation.

12. HERACLEUM MANTEGAZZIANUM - Giant Hogweed
Apiaceae carrot family.
Furanocoumarins – causes Phytophotodermatitis - intense skin irritation when exposed to sunlight. Can cause deep scarring.
Binds with your DNA forming large painful blisters within 24-48 hours.

NOTE : Similar to Fig - Ficus Carica and Spurges – Euphorbias, when exposed to sunlight or rubbed on eyes or in mouth.
Wash with copious amounts of cool water and soap and keep out of sunlight.

13. HYDRANGEA SPECIES – Hydrangea
Cyanogenic glycosides - cyanide. Mildly toxic. Occasionally dermatitis - nausea vomiting lethargy and depression.

14. LABURNUM ANAGYROIDES - Laburnum or Golden Chain tree
Cytisine - like a strong dose of nicotine - nausea and vomiting, gastrointestinal upset, drowsiness, confusion, seizures and coma.
All parts of plant toxic. Seeds can be tempting to children.
Livestock at risk if in hedgerow.
Rinse mouth with water and contact poison centre or vets.

15. NARCISSUS SPECIES – Daffodil
Alkaloides LYCORINE - in the bulb, and crystals of calcium oxylate.
Contact dermatitis.
Ingestion - nausea, vomiting, excessive salivation, convulsions.
In a vase will kill other plants.

16. **OENANTHE CROCATA** - Hemlock Water Dropwort
Carrot family apiaceae. Grows in damp, waterside margins. Most lethal western hemisphere plant. - **Oenanthotoxin** - runaway electrical signals to the brain. Tonic clonal convulsions. Respiratory failure and death.

17. RHODODENDRON SPECIES – Rhododendron
Gryanotoxins - all plant if eaten in large quantities, including pollen. Causes cardiac arrhythmias, gastrointestinal problems, paralysis.
Rapid coloniser leading to depletion of local plant life.

18.SENECIO JACOBEAEA - JACOBAEA VULGARIS - Common Ragwort. **Pyrrolizidine Alkaloides** - irreversible liver damage to horses, cattle, and goats. Sheep are far more resistant.
Live plants have a strong odour and bitter taste; most animals avoid unless pasture is bare.
Danger spikes when in hay or silage.