

# Have you seen this plant?

Fort Pickett needs your help to find colonies of this small, rare plant, called *Michaux's Sumac*. This plant grows in Southside VA and is endangered. It is NOT poisonous. The plant provides food for bobwhite, turkeys and other birds.

The Army spends significant tax-payer dollars to protect the few colonies in the training areas and ranges on post and restricts training to meet federal protection requirements for endangered species. If more colonies are found off-post, training restrictions may be lifted and funding used to train more soldiers.

Colonies of Michaux's sumac on private property are not federally protected like those found on military lands. Land owners can still continue to use their land as they desire. Funding is available for land owners who wish to protect their colonies on a voluntary basis.



If you located a suspected colony of Michaux's sumac, please contact the numbers below. A biologist can either meet you on site or you can text or email a picture. Even if you are not interested in receiving help to protect the plant on private property, knowledge of the colony could be a big step towards recovering the species and is extremely valuable to Ft. Pickett and the VA Dept. of Conservation and Recreation. The largest population known was recently found on private land in Brunswick County!

Please contact the VA Army National Guard Natural Resources Manager, Ken Oristaglio, at **434-264-4929** or [Kenneth.I.Oristaglio.nfg@mail.mil](mailto:Kenneth.I.Oristaglio.nfg@mail.mil). Alternate contact is Brian Webb at **804-436-3784** or [brian.j.webb14.mil@mail.mil](mailto:brian.j.webb14.mil@mail.mil)



# Michaux's Sumac

Example of Michaux's sumac and a close relative, *Winged sumac*. *Winged sumac* has 'wings' on the leaf stem, grows taller than Michaux's sumac, has no serrations on the leaf edges, no hair on the stems, and often has multiple limbs per plant.



A cluster of Michaux's sumac growing near the edge of a hay field.  
Green fruit clusters are visible in the center of the plants.

## Key to Identification:

1. Toothed leaves arranged in 5-7 pairs
2. Hairy, woody stems
3. Single stem per plant
4. Height is below 3 feet
5. Red fruit in late summer



# Michaux's Sumac leaf identification

**Michaux's Sumac**

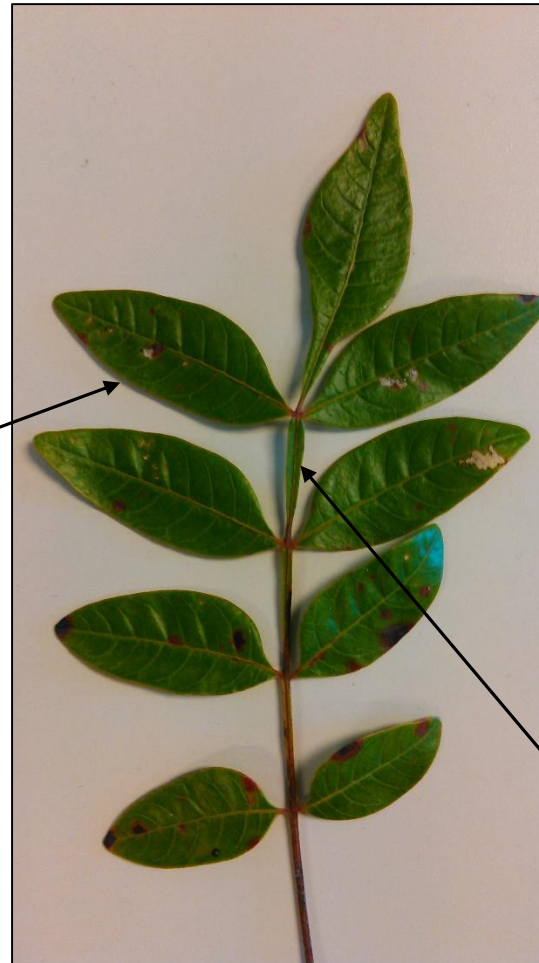


Note  
serrations  
on leaves

Note lack  
of  
serrations  
on leaves



**Winged Sumac**



Similar  
serrations  
as  
Michaux's  
sumac

Note  
'wings'  
on  
stem

**Smooth Sumac**





# Michaux's Sumac (course pubescence)

**Michaux's Sumac**



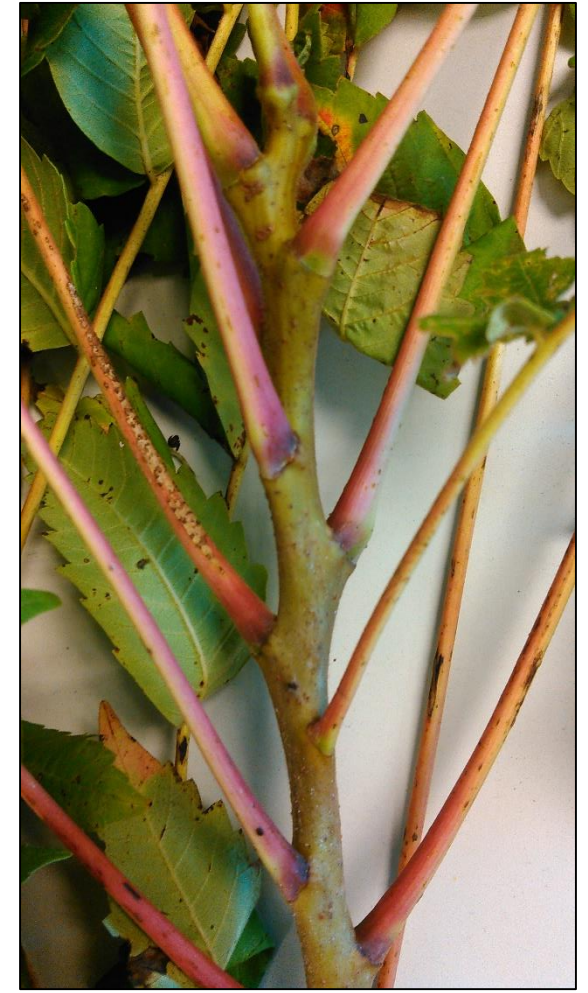
(Note dense 'hair' on woody stem)

**Winged Sumac Stem**



(No 'hair' on stem)

**Smooth Sumac Stem**



(No 'hair' on stem; stem not 'woody')



# Michaux's Sumac fruit

Michaux's Sumac fruit start out green, turn white, and finish red in the late summer. They form single clusters on a stem.

*Multiple clusters on one stem indicates Winged or Smooth Sumac.* Fruit clusters only form when under 3 feet high.



Michaux's Sumac is shorter than other local sumac species. A typical height is 18 inches, although some have been seen as high as 26 inches in dense undergrowth. The stems are almost always single, unbranched, woody stalks covered in dense hair (called pubescence). *Smooth sumac*, *Winged sumac*, and *Staghorn sumac* are all species that often live among and in proximity to Michaux's sumac. These other species are often much taller than Michaux's sumac and lack pubescence. Young stems of *Smooth sumac* can appear to be very similar to Michaux's sumac (both have similarly serrated leaves) but *Smooth sumac* will often branch into multiple stems as it grows through the summer and will often grow over 3 feet tall before forming fruit. Michaux's sumac will die back to the ground every winter.



# Michaux's Sumac habitat



Color of leaves is not a good indicator as they change based on light availability and soil conditions. Each mature branch has ~5-7 sets of leaves.

Sumac typically grows in a colony of multiple stems and prefers pastures, cutovers, and road right-of-ways. They often sprout up after disturbance from logging, construction, tilling, or burning.





# Sumac Winter Dormant Stems

**Michaux's Sumac**



**Tree of Heaven**



**Winged Sumac**

