

# Green Dragon

Arisaema dracontium

- \* Family: Araceae, The Arum Family.
- ❖ Genus: Arisaema is a combination of two Greek words, "Aris" meaning arum and "haema" meaning blood, probably due to the color of a different plant in the genus. A closely related plant is the Jack-in-the-Pulpit. These two plants are often reported to grow near one another.
- Species: dracontium is from the Latin draconem, meaning huge serpent or dragon. The Latin name came from the Greek word dracon, which means serpent.



#### Characteristics

- Herbaceous perennial
- Found growing in damp woods, along streams or ponds, under trees or shrubs.
- \* Fertile moist, slightly acidic, woodland soil.
- Grows from a corm.
- ❖ Ht.: 1'-3'
- ❖ Width: 1'-1.5'
- Light: Deep Shade, Part Shade (Part Shade= 2-6 hours of sun)



#### Flower Parts



- ❖ Spathe A tightly wrapped green leaflike bract.
- Spadix A spikelike structure holding many tiney flowers.
- The flowering stalk grows off the leaf stem near the ground.
- Green Dragon flowers are at the bottom of the long, narrow, taillike spadix.



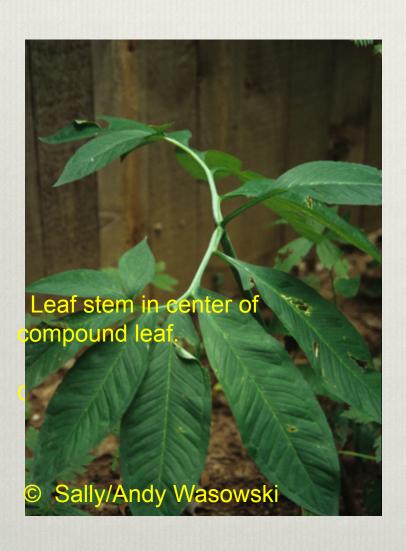
#### Fruits





- After flowering comes a cluster of berries, first green, then turning red. Song birds, woodland birds, and some mammals eat the berries.
- ❖ Flies and a a few other insects are attracted by the flowers.

#### Leaves



- ❖ Generally produces one large compound leaf with a long stem and 7-13 leaflets that are held out horizontally over the plant.
- The largest central leaflet ties directly to the leaf stalk while other leaflets grow from a "branch" on either side. Note the venation.

### Poisonous, All Parts

- Poison Severity: High
- \* Poison Symptoms:
  Irritation and swelling of lips, tongue, and throat if it is eaten raw
- Caused by Calcium oxalate crystals and other toxins.
- \* Poison Parts: Flowers, Fruits, Leaves, Roots, Sap/Juice, Seeds, Stems basically all of it.
- \* Most people can touch and handle it.



# Ethnobotany and Wildlife Benefits

- Used in rituals by Native Americans.
- The root is considered edible once it has been dried, aged and processed. It has been used in herbal medicine. Do NOT do this without knowledgeable supervision!
- The seeds are eaten by song birds, woodland birds, and some mammals.



## Diphasy

This plant, as well as the closely related Jack-in-the-Pulpit, sometimes changes sex. In plants this is called gender diphasy. When small and young, Arisaema dracontium is typically male. When larger, it can become female. Plants may change sex from year to year depending on ecological factors such as weather.



#### Credits and Thanks

- https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/ plants/arisaema-dracontium/
- https://warcapps.usgs.gov
- Arkansas Native Plant
   Society <a href="https://www.Anps.org">www.Anps.org</a>
- Missouri Department of Conservation.
- \* www.wildflower.org
- www.Illinoiswildflowers.info

