

**Symptoms.**—The symptoms of poisoning in horses, cattle and sheep are rather similar. Affected animals become weak. The pulse is rapid. Profuse sweating occurs. Purging usually is present during the entire period of illness. Abdominal pains often are severe. The extremities are cold. Blood often appears in the stool in the terminal stages.

**Prevention.**—The leaves of oleander are fibrous and tough. Animals will not eat them unless there is a shortage of desirable feed.

**Treatment.**—Affected animals can be treated by a veterinarian according to the symptoms shown, but if a lethal dose has been consumed treatment is of little avail.

### Pokeweed

**Description.**—Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana* L.) and Southern pokeweed (*P. rigida* Small) (Fig. 16) is a robust herbaceous plant growing 6 feet or more in height from thick fleshy roots. The stems, simple below, are much branched above. The stem and branches are smooth, colored green or purple. The lower leaves are a foot or more long, gradually diminishing until the upper are about 3 inches. All are spear-shaped. The flowers produced all summer are white, less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch across, borne in narrow clusters several inches long. The flattened, purple-black, juicy berries are  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter and contain several seeds.

**Habitat and Distribution.**—Pokeweed occurs all over Florida. It is most often found in open hammocks and along their margins but it is also frequent on neglected cultivated land, along fence-rows and around dumps or trash piles.

**Toxicity.**—Pokeweed contains a toxic alkaloid and also a toxic substance called phytolaccotoxin. All parts of the plant, principally the berries and roots, are considered toxic to cattle, sheep, horses and hogs. Cases have been reported in which children were poisoned by eating the berries and roots of the plant. The young leaves have been used as greens after thorough boiling and discarding the first water.

**Symptoms.**—Symptoms occur about two hours after the plant has been consumed. Severe gastric intestinal irritation occurs. Nausea, vomiting, purging, retching, spasms and severe convulsions occur, with death resulting from paralysis of the respiratory organs.