

OSU MG Study Group Diagnostic Show-and-Tell Highlights: March 5, 2018

Prepared and photographed by Elizabeth Price

Join our friendly OSU MG Study Group on the first Monday of each month from 1 to 3 pm for Diagnostic Show-and-Tell. Have fun while learning! We explore bugs, diseases and more. Below are a few samples of what MGs brought to our last session.

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Male mason bees (*Osmia lignaria*)

Margaret collected these handsome male blue-green mason bee specimens recently. After they emerge, the males are eager to mate and literally sit and wait at the nest entrance for the females, who appear later. Narrow mason bee nests are segregated by sex. Eggs are laid singly in a row—female eggs at the back, male eggs to the front. This allows the males to chew their way out first without disturbing the females. Each egg is laid on an orb of pollen and nectar. The female builds mud walls between the eggs, enclosing them in private chambers. You can distinguish males from females by their longer antennae and the tufts of golden hair on their heads. These solitary native bees are docile and rarely sting.

For more information: [Nurturing Mason Bees in Your Backyard in Western Oregon](#)

Male mason bee has tuft of golden hair



& longer antennae



Aucuba japonica 'Variegata' (Japanese laurel)

This species of *Aucuba* is dioecious, which means male and female flowers form on separate plants. Emily brought in a female, which was loaded with bright red berries. None of us had ever seen berries on *Aucuba* before but all agreed they improve the plant's appeal. Emily grows hers in a pot but *Aucuba* are hardy outdoors here. They prefer part to full shade and go a long way in brightening up dark areas of the garden. But if you want berries, be sure to plant both male and female plants.

For more information: [Clemson Cooperative Extension](#)

Variegated *Aucuba* leaf



Aucuba berries



Female plant

Rhododendron bud blight

Linda brought in samples of the omnipresent bud blight that afflicts rhododendrons. These images capture damage from last season. To the naked eye, the fruiting structures resemble stubbly whiskers but under magnification look altogether different, more like dancing matchsticks. The fungal spores are spread by insects and splashing rain. The disease rarely warrants chemical intervention; the best control is to snap off and destroy infected buds.

For more information: [PNW Disease Handbook](#)



Bud blight

Fruiting structures under magnification



Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*), native shrub

The only time you might notice this leggy, sprawling shrub is in early spring when it's the sole thing blooming in the forest. The aroma of the dangling clusters of small, 5-petaled white flowers is agreeable to some and not to others. (Not to Elizabeth who brought this sample in.) Everyone seems to agree that the leaves, when crushed, give off a pleasant aroma of cucumbers.

For more information: [Burke Museum](#)

Small white flowers



Early blooming native shrub



Leaves smell like cucumber

