

OSU MG Study Group Diagnostic Show-and-Tell Highlights: March 4, 2019

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.

For more information contact Elizabeth Price: llgmicroeap@mindspring.com

Garden tool sharpening

With the gardening season fast upon us, we were all delighted when Wayne volunteered to sharpen one tool for every MG who attended this session. And, perhaps even better, he demonstrated his technique on hand pruners. Wayne uses a 8" fine-tooth file available at any hardware store for about nine dollars.

- One of the two pruning blades is flat-edged and stationary; do not sharpen this.
- Sharpen only the beveled side of the moveable blade.
- Place the file on the near end of the beveled edge, matching the angle of the blade.
- Run the file along the edge, applying even pressure and making sure to sharpen the entire length.
- Taking great care, test the sharpness of the blade with your finger and continue to file the edge until it is at the desired sharpness.

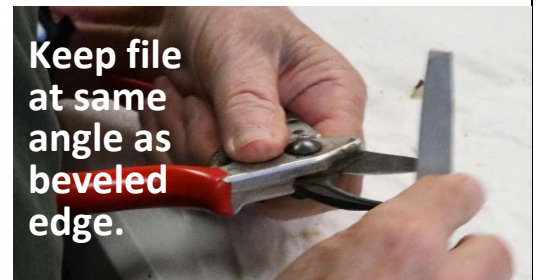


8" fine
tooth flat
file



Wayne
hard at
work

The safest way to perform this task is to put the tool you are sharpening in a vise. This technique also works on lawn mower blades and shovels. Wayne cleans his tools with WD-40 in the fall.



Keep file
at same
angle as
beveled
edge.

THANK YOU WAYNE!

Silver saxifrage (*Saxifraga*)

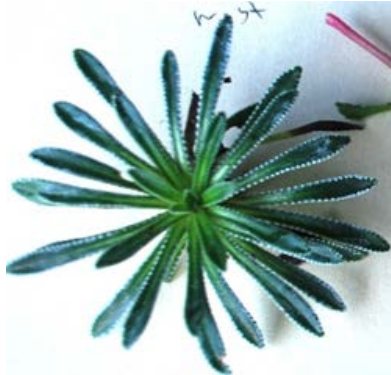
Elizabeth brought in samples of silver saxifrage, evergreen alpine plants native to Europe that grow in tight rosettes. Also called encrusted saxifrage, they secrete lime along the leaf margins, and sometimes on the leaf surface, from specialized pores called hydathodes, giving the leaves the illusion of being framed in tiny lights.

In the wild they are found growing in rock crevices, typically on north-east facing slopes, and as such in the landscape require perfect drainage, as well as protection from afternoon sun. They survive our wet winters as long as water can pass freely over the roots.

The Royal Horticultural Society recommends a growing medium of half gravel and half compost. If you go against this advice as Elizabeth did, you might get lucky; the saxifrage might move itself to the location you should have planted it in the first place (*S. x millstream*). In Elizabeth's garden, *S. paniculata* seems tolerant of regular soil (not clay), as long as it's bermed but, with looser rosettes and wider leaves, it's also less attractive. Unfortunately, the loveliest of them all, *S. crustata*, died outright.

Each rosette flowers once from the center then dies; so if the plant isn't prospering and setting new rosettes, it eventually peters out.

For more information: [Royal Horticultural Society](http://www.rhs.org.uk)



S. crustata rosette



S. x millstream

This saxifrage saved itself by
relocating to a rock crevice.



Close up of
lime-secreting
pores on leaf
margin:
hydathodes