

OSU MG Study Group Diagnostic Show-and-Tell Highlights: May 6, 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.

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***Helwingia chinensis*: an epiphyllous species**

Every so often you encounter a species that challenges your assumptions about what plants can do. Jacki's sample is one such plant: it flowers directly out of the middle of the leaves, a rather rare phenomenon botanists call epiphyllly.

In the *Helwingia* genus, native to the Himalayas and Japan, male and female flowers appear on separate shrubs. The tiny non-showy male umbel in Jacki's specimen seemed joined to the leaf by artificial means. In the close-up photo of an individual flower, you can see the three pollen-producing stamens. Apparently, female plants produce flowers individually, one per leaf, not in umbels, but both sexes are needed for the small dark fruit to set. The leaf in the image had recently emerged and will become larger as the season progresses.

For more information: UBC Botanical Garden



Flowers grow mid-leaf.



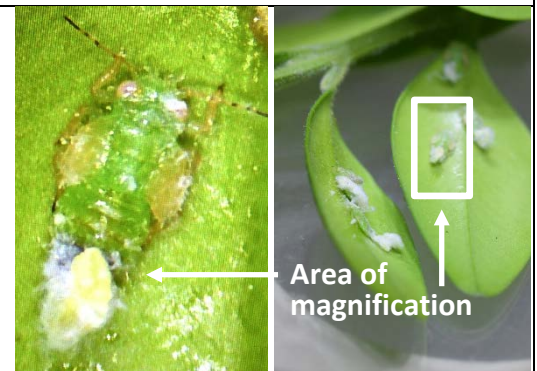
Boxwood psyllids (*Psylla buxi*)

Boxwood psyllids feed on tender young leaves as they emerge at the twig ends in spring, drawing the phloem up with their sucking mouthparts. The feeding cups the leaves around the psyllids in a distinctive way, concealing and protecting them from predators and insecticides. When we unfolded the leaves of Jean's sample we discovered many immature psyllids (nymphs), appearing white due to the waxy coating they secrete, another form of protection. The nymph itself has a leaf-green body with contrasting lighter colored wing pads.

Adult females lay eggs between the bud scales in early summer, where they remain until the following spring. There is one generation per year. The adults' ability to hop has earned them the moniker jumping plant lice in some parts of the country. They are also known to bite humans—but no worries—the bite is not painful.

Boxwoods typically tolerate psyllid damage well, though infested leaves can yellow and look a bit unsightly. To control the problem, prune away and destroy infested tips before the nymphs become egg-laying adults.

For more information: PNW Insect Handbook



Nymph

Infested leaves



Cupped foliage

Pantry moths in quinoa

Margaret's sealed 8 oz bag of organic quinoa was a bit more organic than she would have liked—it harbored pantry moths in all life cycle phases. The larvae's food source (flour, grains, seeds) becomes caught in their webbing, which is what one typically notices. They pupate, emerge as adults and then lay eggs. Needless to say, discard all infested food and clean, clean, clean, including every nook, cranny and crevice in which an adult might lay an egg.

For more information: PNW Insect Handbook

