

You Can Do It!

It's that time of year when a lot of insect questions are directed to our office. Almost always, the MG™ on duty will take in a specimen or write down the information about an insect problem, and it is left for the committee to ID or solve the problem. I know that most MG's are not budding entomologists, but it is always an excellent learning experience to attempt to identify insects or give the client information about keeping the house and garden free of insect pests. Why not try to solve the problem for the client immediately? Since the Insect Committee sometimes doesn't meet for about three weeks, The client is left for that long without a solution. I guess what I am saying is "You CAN do it!"



We have a collection of insects that can help greatly in identifying "bugs" that are brought in. Once identified, the card catalog on top of the insect cabinet will have data about the insect. If that information is not enough, there is a set of excellent books on the shelf to assist you.

There is also the PNW Insect Control Handbook in the MG office, and this is also online. There are a lot of insect publications stored in the main office for distribution to the public. If the client already knows what the problem is, but needs a solution, these publications (some quite specific) are available for their use. I went to a physical therapist when I had a back problem and the subject of carpenter ants came up in our conversation. I explained the life history and damage caused by carpenter ants, and he was very interested because he had seen them in his garage. I also told him that I would drop off some written information at my next visit. He was anxious to get something in writing. This was a good opportunity to make certain he had information in hand that he could use. The committee often sends out these info sheets to clients. The benefit of getting information to the public in a timely manner outweighs the extra time it may take to research an insect problem. Questions about carpenter ants, aphids, craneflies, hobo spiders, and other common insects can be answered easily when you are on duty. There is a looseleaf folder with the text-type books on insects that was compiled and produced by Jake Hurlbert, formerly of our committee. If you have some time, take a look at this folder. It has a great deal of information that could be very helpful when you are on duty. Not only that, but it is a fun publication to look at.

If you are going to leave specimens for the committee, please be sure to place them in alcohol or freeze them. Also, leave a note for the committee as to where they can be found in the office (refrig in kitchen, shelf rack on top of insect cabinet, etc.). Be sure to label the specimen with the clients name.

Get that special feeling of accomplishment by giving a client an answer to an insect question. Remember: YOU CAN DO IT!

