

Diggin' in the Dirt: The Woolly Bear Caterpillar

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2014 OSU/Columbia Master Gardener™ Class Will Be Held in Vernonia (again)

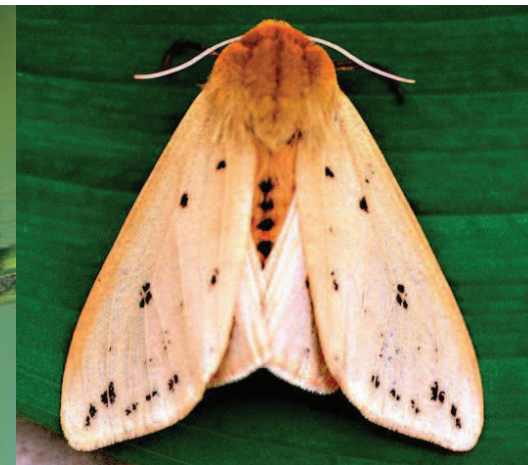
After twenty-one years of having the Master Gardener classes in St. Helens, Vernonia hosted the class in 2010. It was a wonderful class. After discussion with a number of people, we have decided to come back to Vernonia for the 2014 class. The classes will be held at the Vernonia Learning Center each Thursday from about 10:00 am – 3 p.m. starting March 6th 2014; there will be about 10 class days on successive weeks. Classes will start in March to avoid the worst weather and will go through early May. Cost of the class series will still be \$75. Gardeners from all parts of the county are welcome. The classes will cover vegetable and fruit gardening, soils and fertilizers, insect and disease identification and management, weed identification and management, and lots of other topics of interest to gardeners.

Soil crusting

Many of the clay-infused soils of Columbia County can form a crust when tilled. The crust can affect the emergence of small seeds in the spring. Carrot, lettuce and beet seeds have a tough time breaking through crusts.

You can improve your soil structure by the following practices:

- Keep your soil covered when rain is falling. This means a cover crop or mulches in the winter and mulches again in the spring.
- Build your soil structure by adding



Payback projects (an obligation for all Master Gardeners™) will be focused in the Vernonia area and nearby communities. If you are interested in the Vernonia OSU Master Gardener program, please call Chip Bubl at the OSU Extension office 503 397-3462 to get more information and to get on the mailing/email list.

organic matter at every opportunity. Leave crop residues on the soil surface over the winter.

- Lime the soil in the fall if you till.
- Till as shallowly as possible to incorporate organic matter and lime in the fall. Deeper tillage may be needed in the spring.

There will always be an Australia (my apologies to the New Yorker)

An Australian naturalist has enlisted some surprising allies in his war against molds, cockroaches, and termites.

For the mold in his shower, naturalist Robinson began experimenting with slugs! He found them quite efficient. They were especially good at getting mold out of grout and other hard to reach places. He provided them a cozy and moist place to retreat to during the day. One species insisted in roaming around the house at night, so he/she (a little slug humor here) got their walking papers. Realizing that slugs might not fit

termite nests. He tolerates the ants and is free of termites. As he said, pests get used to poisons but not to being eaten. Adapted from the New Scientist

Take extra produce you might have to the food bank, senior centers, or community meals programs. Cash donations to buy food are also greatly appreciated.

The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

Free newsletter

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called County Living) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed to you. Call 503 397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/> and click on newsletters.

Contact information for the Extension office

Oregon State University Extension Service – Columbia County
505 N. Columbia River Highway
(across from the Legacy clinic)
St. Helens, OR 97051
503 397-3462
Email: chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu

Food preservation and food safety

Want to learn how to safely preserve produce from your garden this summer? The OSU Extension Service in Columbia County offers food preservation information and resources. Here is a list of services that we provide:

- Free Printed Publications and Safe Canning Recipes
- Online Publications and Recipes: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fch/food-preservation>
- Free Pressure Canner Gauge Testing (call ahead before bringing in your gauge)
- In addition, you can call our local OSU Extension office in St. Helens at 503 397-3462 with food preservation questions

Woolly bears, winter, and poison hemlock

Popular folk culture says that the width of the black band on the fuzzy woolly bear caterpillar will forecast the severity of the winter. There is no truth to the old tale. The band changes as the caterpillar grows. The caterpillar feeds on plantains (both narrow and broadleaf) as well as clovers, dandelions, and some grasses. They do no economic damage.

Apparently, they can also feed on poison hemlock and the equally deadly water hemlock. They look for hemlock when they are attacked by parasites. Compounds in the hemlock seem to protect the caterpillar.

The adult of the fuzzy woolly bear is the Tiger Isabella moth which is common in these parts in June through August.

all decors, he selected some remarkably colored ones and even found that a white species could be color-coordinated by feeding it with vegetable dyes.

For cockroaches, he has geckos and skinks roaming freely behind the furniture. His most amazing discovery was that a small black ant destroys

Jenny Rudolph, MPA

Made In Vernonia

Bit of something handmade for everyone!



Book Signing by Local Authors
D.Wallace Peach, Stacey Rech & Ken Bilderback
4-6 p.m. Friday, December 6
Refreshments served

Tues & Thur 10-5, Friday 11-5
Sat 10-6, Sun 12-4
(closed Mon. & Wed.)

805 Bridge Street
503-429-0111

Vernonia Volunteer Ambulance Association

CHILI COOK OFF

Presents the 2nd annual
December 7th 2013
Vernonia Senior Center



Cost to enter is \$10.00 per crockpot

Enter your favorite chili in the following categories

- *Traditional Chili
- *Wild Game Chili
- *Vegetarian Chili
- *Turkey Chili
- *Your Original Chili

Prizes will be awarded

Drop off between 9am-10am
Judging to start at 10:30am

Entry forms and payment due at Registration

\$5 Lunch Includes

Bowl of Chili with roll
Drink and Cookie

Lunch sales start at 10:30am until it's gone

Coloring contest with prizes
Kids age 3-12

Check out the event page on facebook