

# Diggin' in the Dirt: Scorpions in Columbia County?

By Chip Bubl  
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Extension Service - Columbia County

## 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)
- Food Preservation and Food Safety Hotline from July 14 through October 17, 2014, 9 AM – 4 PM Monday- Friday. 1-800-354-7319
- A list of our hands-on canning classes can be found on our website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia> or call our office at 503 397-3462  
Jenny Rudolph, MPA  
OSU/Columbia County Extension Educator

## 2014 Home Food Preservation Class Series Offered in Scappoose

Have you thought about learning to preserve fruits, vegetables, fish or game this summer? Are you an experienced canner who would like an update on the latest USDA recommendations? Then plan to attend one or more of the canning classes offered by the Oregon State University Extension Service this summer. Class sessions will be held at the Scappoose Grace Lutheran Church, 51737 Columbia River Hwy, Scappoose, OR 97056. Each class will cost \$25.00 or \$90 if you sign up for all four. Some scholarships are available. Participants

will receive instruction and hands-on experience with safe methods of food preservation. Class size is limited, so sign up today. Pre-registration and pre-payment of class fees are required.

- Thursday, July 31<sup>st</sup> 3:00 to 6:00 pm – Canning Fruits and Pie Fillings
- Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup> 3:00 to 6:00 pm – Pressure Canning Meat, Fish and Vegetables
- Thursday, August 14<sup>th</sup> 3:00 to 6:00 pm – Pickling and Fermenting Vegetables
- Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 3:00 to 6:00 pm – Canning Tomatoes, Sauces and Salsas

For more information and to register for classes, please call or visit the OSU Extension Service office at: 505 N. Columbia River Highway, St. Helens, OR. 503-397-3462

## Natural History Report: Scorpions in Columbia County?

We have a scorpion. It isn't uncommon but you could go through your entire life without seeing it. In 35 years, I have had three samples brought into the Extension office. The scorpion is called *Uroctonus mordax* (no common name yet) and is about 2-3 inches long. Color is reddish to dark brown. The ones I have seen were fairly dark colored. It looks and reacts like any desert scorpion, raising its tail to strike. It can sting if it perceives your finger as a threat or a meal. The sting is reputed to be like the sting of a bee but, as with bees, some people can be allergic to the venom.

The scorpion is most common in the coastal forest zone from British Columbia down to the San Francisco Bay area. The only place I have seen it is under a rotting log. I was looking for dampwood termites to feed one of my son's lizards and this scorpion seemed to have the same idea. We left on good terms. Decaying logs in areas of high rainfall are their preferred habitat.



They feed on crawling insects like beetles, crickets, and larval insects of various types. They need 3-8 inches of decayed material/duff to burrow so big old downed logs with supporting lots of life as they decay and compost are ideal sites to look for them. They mate in December- February and give birth August – October. The young are born alive and cling to their mother's back for about two weeks. Life span isn't well known but assumed to be 6 or more years. They go through several molts before they reach their full size in two years.

## We even have a fire fly (that doesn't fly) but does shine

There are two species of glowworms in the Pacific Northwest, the Western Banded Glowworm and Tiemann's glowworm. These glowworms are best seen in the dark and are found on the forest floor or on the forest edge in leaf litter. It is the females that glow. The light is yellow to greenish in tint and can be almost the size of a dime at its largest or a nail head more commonly. If you pick up the glowing object, you will end up holding a rather plump worm-like creature curled in a circle. The male and female glowworm larva both emit light. The fleshy female adult glowworm has luminescent bands around her body separated by bands of dark color that don't glow. The glowing bands attract males. The female

never turns from a larva into anything dramatically different. She continues as a larviform adult, eating, mating and laying eggs that also glow as they mature. The male, however, is much smaller. He goes through a complete metamorphosis into a small flying glowless beetle, somewhat torpedo

shaped, with large fan-like antennae for detecting the alluring pheromones of the female. But as a male, once he finds the female, he mates. It isn't clear that he ever feeds on anything as an adult. Just searches, flies, mates, and dies.

Like the scorpion above, the glowworms need an insect rich environment for their food.

They love millipedes, which themselves make their living in a decaying, biologically abundant space. The larvae and the adult females both prey on millipedes by first climbing their back eating the millipede's head from behind. Then they inject enzymes that liquefy the hapless millipede's flesh and which they then suck out through hollow mandibles, one segment at a time working toward the tail. All that is left at the end is the sucked out, disconnected millipede rings. The larvae burrow, the adult females, not so much. Look for the glow in the spring, summer, and early fall after rain before first light. I have seen them quite a few times and I get calls periodically about them.

Plant an extra row for the food bank, senior center, 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](mailto:chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu)

## Texting to 9-1-1

May 15 marked the FCC's deadline requiring mobile carriers to implement changes that will allow consumers to text to 9-1-1; however, this technology is not currently available in Oregon. If you send a text to 9-1-1 today, you'll receive a 'bounce back' message indicating texting is not available and asking you to make a voice call to 9-1-1.

Emergency communications professionals recognize that the ability to text

to 9-1-1 would be useful in some situations (such as providing additional accessibility to emergency services for our speech and hearing impaired communities.) 9-1-1 (Public Safety Answering Points) PSAPs and the State 9-1-1 program are currently planning to upgrade Oregon's 9-1-1 infrastructure. When text to 9-1-1 becomes available in Oregon, it will be on a statewide basis.

For now, remember: It's Voice First, in Oregon.

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