

Bugs & Blights

Sharon Collman | WSU Snohomish Extension

Organizing Bugs and Blights

Winter is a great time to be learning about insects and diseases that you may encounter in the spring and summer months, and to assemble some of the information referenced in this column. There are many ways to organize Bugs and Blights so you'll have them at your fingertips. My preference is a three ring binder with monthly a tabs (rather than filing by year). This makes it easier to find the needed information/photos; and as the years pass you'll develop a catalogue of seasonal possibilities. I use clear sheet protectors as they are 3-hole punched and the thickness makes it much easier to thumb through the pages.

Bugs without Borders:

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Vs. Local Stink Bugs

1. BMSB is about the size of the green stinkbug common on raspberries, and other fruit or seed pods.
2. BMSB is dark brown with white markings, as are the young nymphs (young stags look just like little adults without wings). Nymphs and adults feed on the same plants.
3. They are sucking insects, and feed on juices of plants (or prey) often leaving some discoloration under the feeding area of fleshy fruit. (other stinkbugs will sometimes cause similar injury).
4. Some species of stinkbugs are predators and feed on caterpillars, other bugs and insects.
5. Stinkbugs can be green, brown, and even brightly colored.
6. They often have small mites on them.
7. So far BMSB have only been found in Clark and Skamania counties; but their spread is certain.
8. They love to come into houses for winter. (Why not it's warm and easier than flying to Arizona.)
9. BMSB has a huge host range from ornamentals to edibles and herbs. See Todd Murray's Pest Alert at <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/FS079E/FS079E.pdf> for a list of more hosts and look-alikes.
10. There are other insects that also like to come into the house walls and attics for winter. They include a few beetles (ladybugs, elm leaf beetle), flies, yellowjackets, and true bugs (seed bugs, and western conifer seed bug, a leaf-footed bug called that because of the leaf-like expansion on the hind leg.
11. See Todd Murray's Pest Alert on BMSB for host plants, and look-alikes with clear photos portraying ID characteristics. Below is BMSB along with 3 other stink bugs that are common in Washington.



Brown marmorated stink bug. by David R. Lance, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



Native stink bug. by Sharon J. Collman, WSU Snohomish County Extension



Possibly Conchuela stink bug. by Sharon J. Collman, WSU Snohomish County Extension.



Red-cross stink bug. by Sharon J. Collman, WSU Snohomish County Extension.



Note the beak for sucking plant juices; the spots are normal lenticels in the stem.

January 2013