How to Point Adult Insects

Insects so small and fragile that are likely to be broken or disfigured by pinning should be mounted on heavy white paper or file card paper called points. There is a template for making points on the OSU 4-H Entomology website. In Unit 4, Section 8 Labeling and Displaying (http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/projects/natural-science/entomology). Copy it onto index card stock and cut them out as you need them. There is a Pinning Small Insects (Using Points) video demonstration in Section 7.

HINT: any hard-bodied insect smaller than a lady beetle should be pointed.

The triangle point is 3/8" long and 1/8" wide at base.

1. Pin the point through its base until 3/8" is above the point on the pin. Use the pinning block for support.

2. Bend the tip of the point downward with forceps or tweezers.

3. Lay the insect on its back.

4. Touch the tip of the point to a drop of glue or clear nail polish.

5. Touch the glued point to the right side of the insect’s abdomen at the second segment of the thorax.

6. Flip the insect right side up and straighten the insect on the point. If possible, extend the left legs away from the body for identification purposes.

7. The insect and point should be to the left of the pin and faced away from the person doing the pinning.

8. The labels should be aligned with the insect on the point.