

## News Release

Extension Educator, Horticulture/4-H Youth Development  
Canadian County OSU Extension Office  
Phone: 405-262-0155, Fax: 405-262-2267  
E-mail: casey.sharber@okstate.edu

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### **The Vine** **By Casey Sharber**

#### *A Horticulture Halloween*

#### *Witches Broom*

At this time of year hearing someone mention a witch's broom may not seem that out of the ordinary, but have you ever heard it mentioned any other time of the year? Well, there is a natural phenomenon that occurs in plants called a witches' broom.

A witches broom is an abnormal growth on a plant where multiple buds begin to branch in a very dense compacted area, thus creating a broom-like appearance. These brooms are often best identified in the winter when there are fewer leaves on the trees.

Witches' brooms can occur due to a variety of reasons. Environmental stresses such as insects or fungus can initiate the occurrence or it may just be a simple mutation that occurs in the plant. On occasion the mutations of a witches broom have resulted in new dwarf plant material for landscaping in homeowner and public settings.

#### *Witch Hazel*

You may be familiar with the Witch Hazel product that you can purchase at the pharmacy. It is a product that has been around for many years and has several different medicinal uses, but is probably best known for being an astringent.

This product is extracted oils from the pulp of the Witch Hazel plant, *Hamamelis virginiana*. This plant is native to North America, but best grown in the Eastern United States.

Until next time - STOP, LOOK, and ENJOY!

~ Casey

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