A GRAPHIC GUIDE ONTARIO OOSSES

by ROBERT MUMA



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

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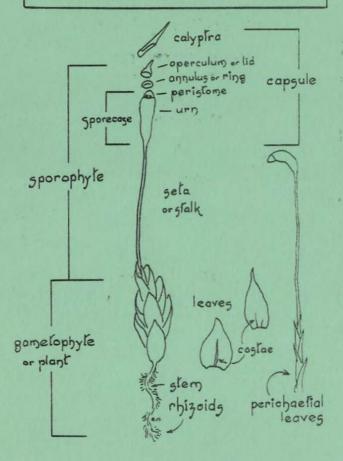
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ANATOMY of a
TYPICAL MOSS PLANT

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FOREWORD

This Guide is intended only as a graphic aid to PROBABLE GENUS, based on recognizable growth forms of mosses. (The growth forms charted here do not include all genera, and the growth form under which a genus is listed does not always represent all species of that genus.) It is hoped that a study of Plates 1 to 10 will make it easier to use one of the recommended texts on mosses listed on page 22. For a systematic listing of Ontario genera under class, sub-class, order, and family, refer to Ireland and Cain, CHECKLIST OF THE MOSSES OF ONTARIO.

If this Guide helps the beginner who is as yet unfamiliar with moss terms, then it will have served its purpose.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Robert R. Ireland of the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa has given valuable suggestions and Terry Carleton of the University of Toronto has been enthusiastic and helpful from the beginning. Their encouragement and advice are appreciated. Illustrated by the author. Edited by Helen Juhola and Diana Banville.

AREA COVERED

Although this Guide has been devised for Ontario mosses, a few west coast genera have been included for broader interest.

THE NATURE OF A MOSS

The Mosses (MUSCI) belong to a group of plants called the BRYOPHYTA, believed to have evolved from that aquatic life form known as the green algae. They are "cryptogamous", i.e. sexually reproducing but without stamens, pistils, or true seeds. Thus the bryophytes are the first land-based forms of plant life we know of. A few species of mosses are still aquatic, but most of them can survive long periods of dry weather successfully because their structure is such that, after the drought, they absorb moisture very quickly and soon "revive". All mosses, besides requiring moisture for their survival, also need water for sexual reproduction. The sperm, in order to reach the nearest ovum, must swim through a film of moisture (from rain or dew) over the surface of the plant. (See diagram inside back cover.) It is obvious then that mosses flourish most readily in moist and cool habitats.

Another significant feature of the bryophytes is that they do not take nourishment from the soil directly by means of a central core and elaborate root system. They have no roots as such, nor a central core, but absorb all the nutrients they require from the air and from the minerals washed by the rain from the foliage of trees and other plants overhead.

TYPICAL HABITAT

With the foregoing facts in mind, typical habitat can be described as "moist, cool, and shady places".

DESCRIPTION

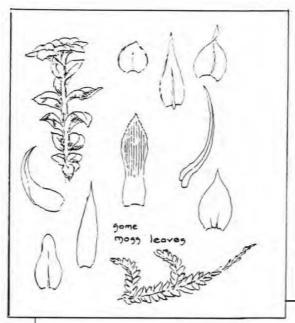
Most mosses are characteristically plant-like in structure, with stem, leaves, * and "fruit". Although not always readily apparent, the leaves grow spirally around the stem or in a flat, two-row arrangement. They superficially resemble another group of bryophytes in class HEPATICAE - the leafy liverworts, which have flattened leaves arranged in two rows, often with a third row underneath (distinct from the thalloid liverworts which lie flat on the gound without a stem or separate leaves). See illustrations opposite, for comparison.

Sharing the same habitat, mosses and liverworts are often found growing together, intertwined and at first seemingly indistinguishable. With experience, however, the more flexible, almost gelatinous texture of the liverworts becomes an instantly recognizable characteristic.

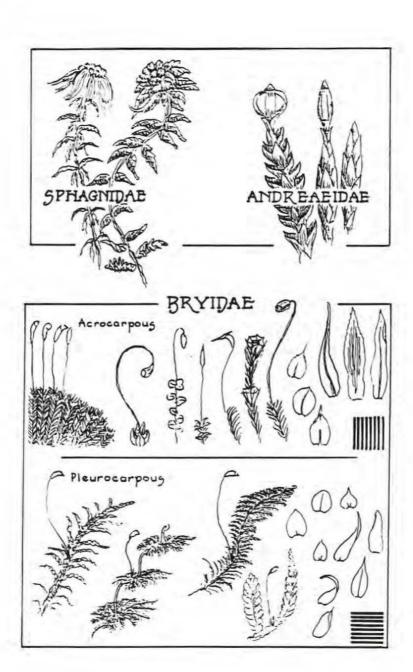
*The leafless "reindeer moss" or "caribou moss" is a misnomer; it is not a mossbut a lichen.

> "...the soft green beds into which our feet sink, and all the loveliness which we think of when we think of -- mosses."

John Ruskin







CLASSIFICATION OF MOSSES

The class MUSCI (Mosses) is divided into three sub-classes: (See illustrations

- SPHAGNIDAE, a small sub-class consisting of a single family and a single genus with 135 species world-wide. These are the familiar SPHAGNUM mosses of the peat bogs.
- (2) ANDREAEIDAE has two families; only two species in genus ANDREAEA are in our area. These are boreal and alpine rock mosses.
- (3) BRYIDAE contains all other mosses, of numerous genera and an estimated 10,000 species throughout the world. They belong to many families, but it is more useful to divide the genera into two growth forms. These are known as (a) Acrocarpous mosses and (b) Pleurocarpous mosses. In any standard systematic guide to the mosses you will find (with only two or three exceptions) the first group in the first half of the book, and the second group in the latter half. Recognition of these two growth forms constitutes the basis for this guide. (For moss-anatomy terms mentioned below, see diagram inside front cover.)
- (a) Acrocarpous mosses are those which grow upright as individual plants, either separately or very close together to form a turf, tuft, or cushion. In this group, the leaves nearly always have a costa, and the sporophyte grows from the tip or highest part (acros: highest; karpos: fruit). Some of the common acrocarpous genera are DICRANUM, TORTELLA, BARBULA, MNIUM, BRYUM, POLYTRICHUM. Perichaetial leaves not usually visible.
- (b) Pleurocarpous mosses are the prostrate or creeping plants on ground, wood, or rock surfaces. Some of these add new intertwining or overlaid growth each year to form mats. The leaves are usually without costs and the sporophyte grows from the side of one of the branches of the plant (pleura: side; karpos: fruit). The perichaetial leaves are longer and often quite different from the regular leaves. Many of the pleurocarpous mosses are known popularly as "feather mosses" and "fern mosses", including the genera HYPNUM, THUIDIUM, AMBLYSTEGIUM, BRACHYTHECIUM, PLAGIOTHECIUM, HYLOCOMIUM.

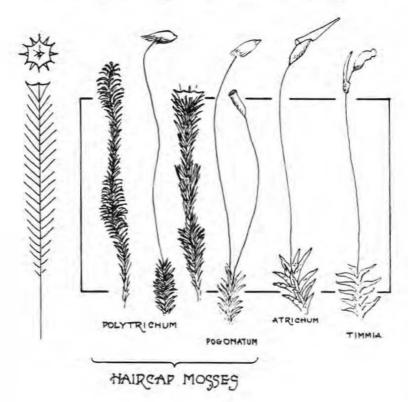
IDENTIFICATION

- Note the symbols for acrocarpous and pleurocarpous moss forms and look for the clues to your specimen's genus under the applicable symbol in the following growth-form plates numbered 1 - 10.
- If your specimen has sporophytes,* check their posture with the diagrams on pages 16, 17, 18.
- Also check for habitat, page 19.

Note: In this GJIDE the name of each genus is shown in upper case letters, e.g. BRYUM. Where a single species is relevant, the genus (in capitals) is followed by the specific name in lower case, as BRYUM argenteum. Where broader classifications are mentioned, they are shown in upper case italics, i.e. family, order, sub-class, class, and the phylum (BRYOPHYTA).

^{*}Some mosses seldom produce sporophytes but tend to reproduce asexually.

1 LONG NARROW LEAVES in 3 or more RANKS about the stem

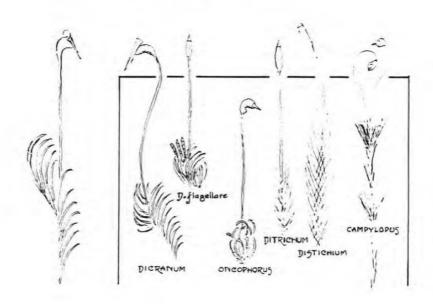


ATRICHUM POGONATUM POLYTRICHUM TIMMIA

2

LONG NARROW LEAVES straight curved brugh or BROOM shaped





CAMPYLOPUS (West Coast)

CYNODONTIUM

DICRANELLA

DICRANUM

DISTICHIUM

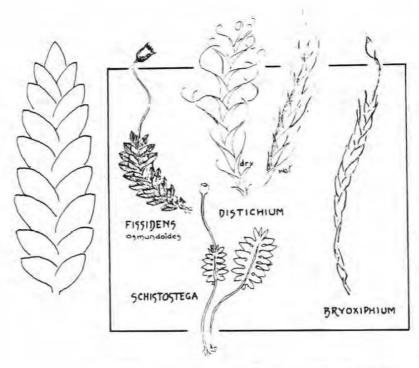
DITRICHUM

ONCOPHORUS

PARALEUCOBRYUM

TREMATODON

LEAVES in 2 RANKS and forming FLAT (for like) PLANTS



FISSIDENS DISTICHIUM

SCHISTOSTEGA

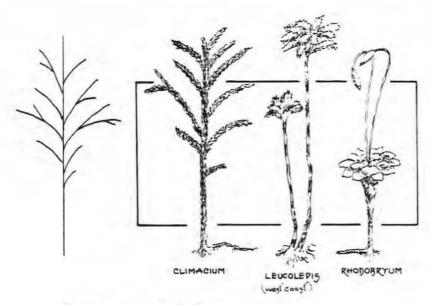
BRYOXIPHIUM

These are the only distichous (leaves in 2 ranks) acrocarpous genera occurring on our continent, and only the first two are very likely to be encountered here. SCHISTOSTEGA (Cave Moss) has been found a few times in Ontario in dark places cut off from direct light. BRYOXIPHIUM (Sword Moss) has never been found in Canada at all. It is a curious moss found on some vertical sandstone cliffs across the U.S., Greenland and Iceland. It illustrates here the wide ranging form of this limited group.

The FISSIDENS genus is unusual in having species in both acrocarpous and pleurocarpous groupings. Position of the sporophyte determines which group the species belongs to. See also Plate 8.



SEPARATE UPRIGHT PLANTS DEMDROID (tree-shaped) or UMBRELLA-shaped



North America has few dendroid genera:

In the east:

CLIMACIUM*

RHODOBRYUM

THAMNOBRYUM

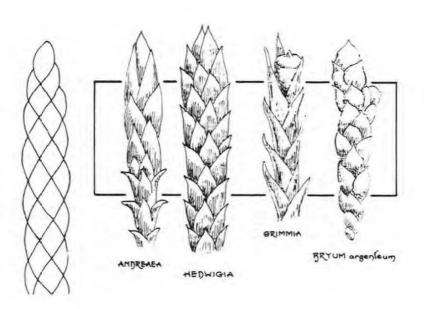
On the west coast:

LEUCOLEPIS

New Zealand is noted for its variety of dendroid mosses, including the picturesque "umbrella mosses".

#CLIMACIUM is included in this acrocarpous grouping only because it is so obviously a separate, upright plant and seldom has sporophytes to establish its true identity in this respect. When it does have sporophytes, they emanate from along its branches; therefore, it properly belongs with the pleurocarpous mosses. See Plate 9 (page 14).

5 LEAVES MULTI-RANKED appressed, julaceous* Jorning cylindrical, ROPE like PLANTS

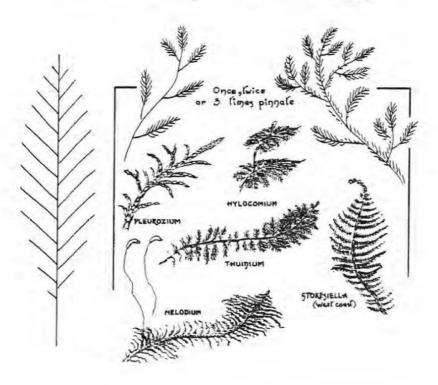


ANDREAEA
BRYUM argenteum
GRIMMIA

HEDWIGIA ORTHOTRICHUM ULOTA

Julaceous = smoothly cylindrical

6 PINNATE BRANCHING FEATHER Shaped or FERNINGES



ABIETINELLA

BRACHYTHECIUM

DREPANOCLADUS

HAPLOCLADIUM

HELODIUM

HYLOCOMIUM

HYPNUM

PLEUROZIUM

PTILIUM (illustrated page 12)

RHYTIDIADELPHUS

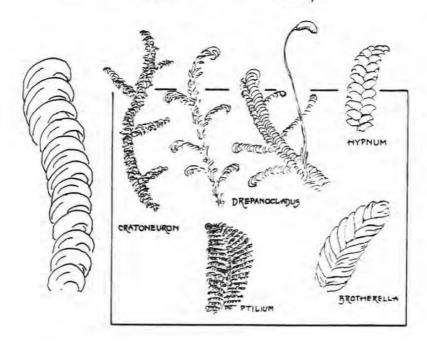
STOKESIELLA

THELIA

THUIDIUM

Thookor SICKLE - shaped





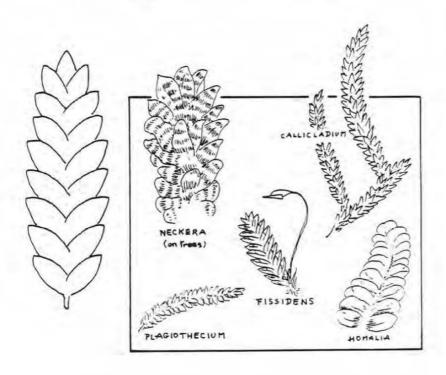
BROTHERELLA CRATONEURON DREPANOCLADUS HYPNUM

CTENIDIUM PTILIUM

The genus HYPNUM is the largest of this group with several common species. The name comes from a Greek word meaning "sleep" and is believed to have referred to the mosses' recumbent nature. Many of the pleurocarpous mosses were thus formerly classed as HYPNUM species.

LEAVES in 2 RANKS and/or forming FLAT (fan-like) BRANCHES





CALLICLADIUM ENTODON

FISSIDENS

HOMALIA

ISOPTERYGIUM

NECKERA

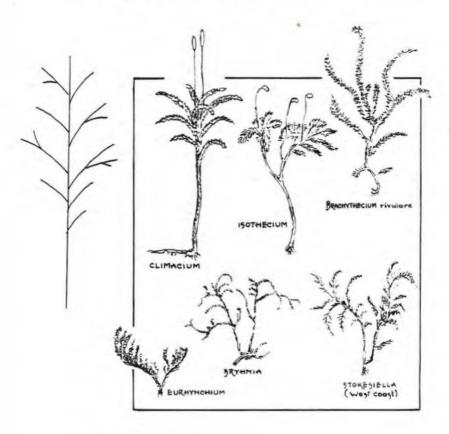
PLAGIOTHECIUM

TAXIPHYLLUM

CALLICLADIUM is one of our commonest woodland mosses with its single species C. haldanianum on tree roots and rotting logs. It can also be confusing with its complanate (flattened) branches so similar to other genera.

DENDROID ((ree-shaped) and SUB-DENDROID PLANTS

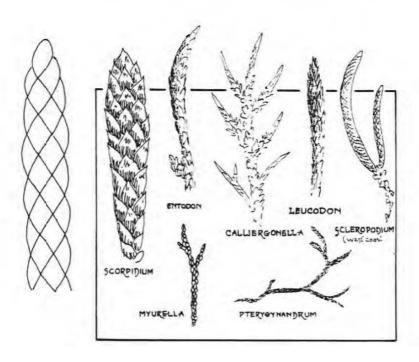




BRACHYTHECIUM EURHYNCHIUM BRYHNIA ISOTHECIUM CLIMACIUM STOKESIELLA

CLIMACIUM is the most typically dendroid of these genera. All of the others are members of the family BRACHYTHECIACEAE and various BRACHYTHECIUM species may be found growing sub-dendroid in very wet, or deep grassy places.

LEAVES MULTI-RANKED appressed proming cylindrical, ROPE-like BRANCHES



CALLIERGONELLA HEDWIGIA* PTERYGYNANDRUM
CALLIERGON LESKEA SCLEROPODIUM
ENTODON LEUCODON SCORPIDIUM
GRIMMIA* MYURELLA THELIA

*Although HEDWIGIA and GRIMMIA may at times appear to be either pleurocarpous or acrocarpous, for taxonomic reasons the former is classified as pleurocarpous and the latter as acrocarpous. See Plate 5 (page 10).

SPOROPHYTE characteristics

A. With little or NO gETA and little or NO STEM





DIPHYSCIUM EPHEMERUM GRIMMIA HEDWIGLA PHASCUM PHYSCOMITRIUM immersum PLEURIDIUM

B. ERECT capsule, on sela al least 2x capsule



ATRICHUM BARBULA CERATODON" CLIMACIUM DESMATODON DISTICHIUM DITRICHUM ENCALYPTA GYMNOSTOMUM

PHYSCOMITRIUM pyriforme PLATYGYRIUM POGONATUM POLYTRICHUM POTTLA PYLAISIELLA RHACOMITRIUM SELIGERIA

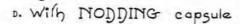
TETRAPHIS TORTELLA TORTULA WEISSIA

c. Suberector HORIZONTAL capsule, on seta at least 2x length of capsule



CERATODON# DICRANELLA DICRANUM FISSIDENS

LEUCOBRYUM **ONCOPHORUS** PHILONOTIS TIMMIA







BRYUM CINCLIDIUM FUNARIA LEPTOBRYUM PLAGIOMNIUM POHLIA RHIZOMNIUM RHODOBRYUM

*inclined to horizontal capsules but may also be erect.

SPOROPHYTE characteristics

A. With liffle or NO GETA



GRIMMIA HEDWIGLA NECKERA

ORTHOTRICHUM

ULOTA



B. ERECT capquie, on sela alleas 2x capquie

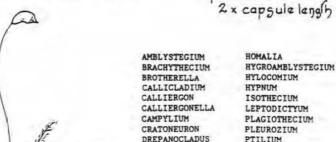


ANACAMPTODON BRYHNIA CLIMACIUM ENTODON

LESKEA PLATYDICTYA PTERYGYNANDRUM THELIA



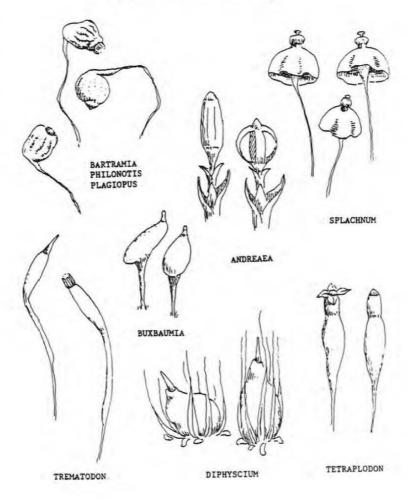
c. Suberector MORIZONTAL copyule on sela



EURHYNCHIUM FISSIDENS HELODIUM HERZOGIELLA PTILIUM RHYTIDIADELPHUS SCORPIDIUM THUIDIUM TOMENTHYPNUM



Some UNUSUAL & RARE SPOROPHYTES



MOSS HABITATS

A. Forest Floor E. Swamps, Bogs, H. Disturbed Soil. Open Ditches, Garden Paths. ATRICHUM Marshy Ground Greenhouses BRACHYTHECIUM HYLOCOMIUM AULACOMNTUM BARBULA BRACHYTHECIUM BRYUM PLAGIOTHECIUM BRYHNIA CERATODON PLEUROZIUM BRYUM DITRICHUM POLYTRICHUM CALLIERGON EPHEMERUM RHYTIDIADELPHUS CALLIERGONELLA FUNARIA THUIDIUM CLIMACIUM LEPTOBRYUM CRATONEURON PHASCUM B. Tree Trunks DREPANOCLADUS PHYSCOMITRIUM and Branches HELODIUM POHL IA MNIUM POTTIA ANTITRICHIA PHILONOTIS (west coast) PLAGIOTHECIUM I. Old Animal Droppings & bones DENDROALSIA DENDROALSIA POLYTRICHUM (west coast) SCORPIDIUM SPLACHNUM ISOTHECIUM (w. coast) SPHAGNUM TAYLORIA LEUCODON TOMENTHYPNUM TETRAPLODON NECKERA ORTHOTRICHUM PLATYGYRIUM J. Sidewalks, Pavement, PYLAISIELLA Walls, Roofs ULOTA BARBULA BRYUM argenteum C. Old Logs F. Stream Banks, CERATODON and Stumps Shady Hillsides TORTULA muralis CALLICLADIUM ATRICHUM CTENIDIUM BRACHYTHECIUM K. Burned Area, Campfire Sites FISSIDENS DICRANUM HYPNUM BRYUM ENTODON MNIUM FUNARIA HYLOCOMIUM POLYTRICHUM HYPNUM PLATYGYRIUM PTILIUM PYLAISIELLA L. Rocks RHYNCHOSTEGIUM TETRAPHIS GRIMMIA NECKERA THUIDIUM HEDWIGIA ORTHOTRICHUM HYPNUM PLATYGYRIUM D. Base of Trunk ISOTHECIUM TORTULA and Tree Roots

ANOMODON BRACHYTHECIUM BROTHERELLA CALLICLADIUM HOMALIA

LEUCOBRYUM PLAGIOTHECIUM G. Bare Roadside Banks

BARBULA BRYUM CERATODON HYPNUM MNIUM

M. Rocks on Mountains

MYURELLA ULOTA

ANDREAEA GRIMMIA RHACOMITRIUM CHECKLIST OF MOSSES IN THE JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE (property of the Toronto Field Naturalists near Uxbridge, Ontario) AT OCTOBER 10, 1984

SPHAGNIDAE

SPHAGNUM fimoriatum SPHAGNUM magellanicum SPHAGNUM russowii SPHAGNUM squarrosum SPHAGNUM warnstorfii This checklist of specimens has been confirmed by Robert R. Ireland, Curator of Bryophytes Dept. of Botany, National Museum of Sciences, Ottawa.

BRYIDAE (Acrocarpi)

ATRICHUM oerstedianum AULACOMNIUM palustre BRYUM argenteum (silvery bryum) BRYUM pallescens DICRANUM flagellare (whip fork moss) DICRANUM montanum DICRANUM undulatum DICRANUM viride FISSIDENS adiantoides LEPTOBRYUM pyriforme (thread moss) LEUCOBRYUM glaucum (white moss of or pin cushion moss) ONCOPHORUS wahlenbergii ORTHOTRICHUM speciosum var. elegans PLAGIOMNIUM ciliare PLAGIOMNIUM ellipticum PHILONOTIS fontana (fountain apple m.) POHLIA nutans POLYTRICHUM commune(common haircap m.) POLYTRICHUM juniperinum (juniper moss) POLYTRICHUM strictum RHIZOMNIUM appalachianum RHIZOMNIUM pseudopunctatum RHODOBRYUM ontariense (Ontario rose m.) TETRAPHIS pellucida (four-tooth moss) TIMMIA megapolitana (Indian brave moss) ULOTA crispa

BRYIDAE (Pleurocarpi)

AMBLYSTEGIUM varium BRACHYTHECIUM campestre BRACHYTHECIUM rivulare BRACHYTHECIUM salebrosum BRACHYTHECIUM oxycladon BROTHERELLA recurvans

CALLICLADIUM heldanianum CALLIERGON cordifolium CAMPYLIUM chrysophyllum CLIMACIUM dendroides (tree moss) DREPANOCLADUS aduncus DREPANOCLADUS exannulatus DREPANOCLADUS uncinatus HELODIUM blandowii HERZOGIELLA turfacea HYLOCOMIUM splendens (stair-step moss) HYPNUM imponens (common feather moss) HYPNUM pallescens HYPNUM lindbergii LEPTODICTYUM trichopodium PLAGIOTHECIUM denticulatum PLAGIOTHECIUM laetum PLATYGYRIUM repens PLEUROZIUM schreberi (Schreber's moss) PYLAISIELLA polvantha RHYTIDIADELPHUS triquetrus (shaggy moss or rough-neck moss) THUIDIUM recognitum (fern moss)

A collection of specimens of the above species is deposited in the National Herbarium in Ottawa. It is requested that specimens of any other species found at the Reserve be sent, for addition to this collection, to:

> Robert Muma 625 Rushton Road Toronto, Ontario, M6C 2Y8 (phone 654-5635)

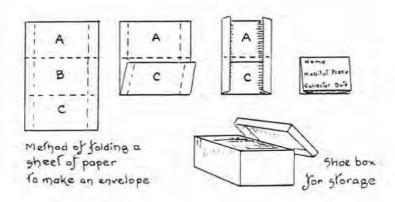
COLLECTING

The best way to identify and know the mosses is to collect a sample of each kind you find (being careful not to disturb the habitat). Plastic sandwich bags are an ideal way to carry them from the field. Be sure to remove them as soon as possible when you get home, or keep them in a cool place. Remember, mosses contain a lot of moisture and will sweat and mildew if left for too long in a warm place in an airtight container.

The simplest way of storing specimens is in paper envelopes made from plain or scrap paper and folded as shown. Either letter size or half is suitable. Be sure to write details of geographic location, habitat, date, and name when you have determined it, on the outside. Store these packets in a shoe box or similar container. These dried specimens can be quickly "revived" for study at any time by immersing a sample in water.

Select a suitable specimen of each species to press lightly (they dry very quickly) and paste in a note book with the name for future reference. This saves the bother of opening up envelopes for comparing specimens.

For identification purposes, you will need a good 10-power hand lens. If you have access to a binocular dissecting microscope, so much the better; and a compound microscope may be necessary for observing the finer distinctions between some species.



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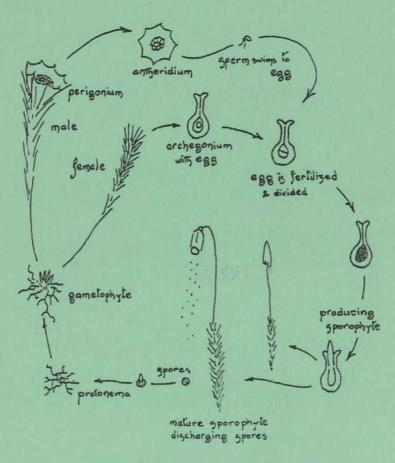
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