

A Beginners Guide to Mosses

FSC Margam



A low-carbon footprint building, Margam Discovery Centre boasts both natural and made attractions, including a 600 acre deer park with three species of deer roaming freely and an Iron Age fort, culminating in rich opportunities for studying.

Date Fri 25 Oct - Sun 27 Oct	Level Beginners	Sole occupancy £289	Shared room £260	Non-resident £180
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Course Overview

This course provides the basic framework to start identifying mosses and liverworts and their habitat within Margam Park. Whilst many people are familiar with wild flowers, the study of mosses and liverworts breaks new ground. When looked at closely they are very beautiful plants and at their best in the winter months when there is less opportunity in wild flowers. After an introduction to mosses and liverworts, where to look and what to look for to distinguish one from the other, we will spend time outside collecting specimens, using hand lenses in the field followed by sessions in the laboratory (where it is warm and dry) to identify them and look at special features more closely under microscopes. Welcome to the wonderful world of bryophytes.



Course Description

- By the end of the course the participants will be able to:
- Identify some of the more common mosses and liverworts using keys
- Know how to separate mosses from liverworts and the features to look for in identification
- Appreciate the range of habitats and the different species to be found in each
- Use a x10 hand lens and microscope to look at features more closely
- Make a reference collection

Timetable

Friday	Introduction of mosses and liverworts and the habitats of Margam Park
Saturday	After a briefing we will take a walk around the park looking in a range of habitats, collecting specimens that we will study in greater detail in the laboratory and assemble a list of our finds for the S E Wales Biological Recording Centre. In the evening we will discuss the ecology of bryophytes and their use as habitat indicators.
Sunday	There will be further field work of mosses on walls of the abbey ruins and gardens around the visitor centre. Returning for lunch and a final session in the laboratory and help on taking the interest further. The course concludes with tea and Cakes.

About the Tutor

Dr June Chatfield has a long interest in mosses and liverworts and is a member of the British Bryological Society and a Fellow of the South London Botanical Institute. She has worked as a college lecturer and museum curator and knows this area well from her time as Assistant Keeper in Zoology at the National Museum of Wales. She is the author of *How to Begin the Study of Mosses and Liverworts* published by the British Naturalists Association in 2008. She now lives in Hampshire.

What to Bring

Warm waterproof clothes for field work, over trousers are useful. These can be hired at the centre

- Walking boots or Wellingtons
- Lunch box and thermos
- Notebook, pencils and pens
- Equipment such as x10 hand lens, forceps, mounted needles and cameras
- Haversack for taking equipment into the field
- Any reference books that you may have

Arrival/Departure Times

This course officially starts at 6.00pm on the Friday with dinner and registration. Please aim to arrive between 4:00-5:00, there will be coffee and cake available from 4pm onwards.

Breakfast will be at 8am; Lunch will be a packed lunch.

The course will end on Sunday at 4:00pm.

How to Book

Please book online via www.field-studies-council.org or contact the Centre by phone on 01639 895636 or email enquiries.mp@field-studies-council.org