



Introduction to Mosses: Diversity, Ecology, and Physiology

June 21–27, 2026

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This introductory-level seminar for students, educators, and nature enthusiasts is focused on mosses (a group of bryophytes) of Maine with general application to northern N. America, as mosses are broadly distributed. Lectures, field trips, and lab time will give participants a strong foundation in moss diversity, ecology, and physiology. In the field, students will explore a variety of habitats while learning to (1) recognize common moss genera/species, (2) document microhabitat specificity, (3) learn ecological functions & interactions, and (4) assess climate-stress and protective microhabitats. Lectures will review life cycle, morphology, and vulnerability to climate change including unique physiological traits that may offer resiliency to some species. In lab, students will view (beautiful) morphological diversity, develop microscope skills, and learn key traits to identify over 30 common species (i.e. formal keying to species will not be a focus of this class; rather, we will use habitat & morphological traits illustrated in Jenkin’s Mosses of the North Woods illustrated guide as a more intuitive, easier path to learning common species!). This seminar will prepare participants to collect and continue studying mosses on their own. No prior experience with moss identification or microscopes is needed. Join us for an immersive journey into the miniature but mighty world of Maine’s mosses!

Theresa Clark (theresaannclark@gmail.com) is a bryophyte ecologist and educator originally from Maine, where she fell in love with bryophytes during an Eagle Hill seminar in 2004. During her M.Sc. (Northern Arizona University), she produced a moss flora and ecological analysis of bryophytes in the Grand Canyon. She specialized in arid land moss ecophysiology during her PhD (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), studying moss resiliency to climate change. As a postdoc at the University of Minnesota, she studied functional trait ecology of Utah canyon mosses. She has contributed to several other moss floras (e.g. in Costa Rica and the Shawangunk Mountains of NY) and offers regular moss outreach events and workshops for children and adults alike. When not “mossing”, she teaches biology at St. Catherine University, in St. Paul, MN. See more about her research & past workshops at <https://www.mossesinmotion.com/>.