

Saving Spoon-leaved Moss:

What you can do to help

Spoon-leaved Moss (*Bryoandersonia illecebra*) leaves look like tiny spoon handles: it has cup-shaped leaves with twisted tips. The twisted leaf tip can be easily seen with a magnifying lens. It is quite large compared with most moss species, making it relatively easy to find and identify in the field. Another distinguishing feature is its 'rat's tail' branches — these can grow thick and become intertwined to form deep mats that cover the ground.

Do you live near Spoon-leaved Moss?

In Canada, Spoon-leaved Moss occurs only in southern Ontario. Spoon-leaved Moss is found in deciduous and mixed forests that are moist or at least seasonally flooded. It is usually found on soil, but sometimes grows on rocks or tree bases.

What you can do to help

- ✓ **Learn to identify this plant.** If you are lucky enough to discover a new population of Broad Beech Fern, be sure to report it to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or the Natural Heritage Information Centre.
- ✓ **Do not collect this plant** or its parts for medicinal, ornamental or any other uses.
- ✓ **Maintain a naturally-vegetated buffer** between Spoon-leaved Moss and areas you use herbicides. Chemicals contained in the herbicides may be harmful to this moss.
- ✓ **Avoid logging** near Spoon-leaved Moss. Here are a few tips if you need to harvest:
 - Consult with your local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authority or Woodlot Association before logging near the Spoon-leaved Moss population.
 - Maintain at least a 30m vegetation buffer zone between the cut area and the Spoon-leaved Moss population.



Photo credit: D. A. Sutherland

Field check

- ✓ Leaves: 2.8 mm long; shiny green to green-yellow-brown; "spoon handles": cupped with a twisted tip
- ✓ Forms deep mats of tangled "rats' tails" on the ground

Did you know?

Mosses have male and female plants. Water is required so the sperm from male plants can swim to the eggs found on female plants.

- ✓ **Stay on designated trails** when walking, cycling or driving an off-road vehicle in a natural area to avoid trampling vegetation and damaging sensitive habitat.
- ✓ **Help protect roadside habitat.** Reduce use of road salt and don't mow along roadsides. Contact your municipality about practices that may be harmful to the moss.

More Best Stewardship Practices

- ✓ **Keep your pets on a leash** when you walk them in natural areas, as pet hair can transport invasive plant seeds.
- ✓ **Learn to identify invasive species.** Your local Conservation Authority or Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Office can provide you with information on invasive species that occur in your area and what you can do to help prevent their spread.
- ✓ **Avoid dumping waste of any kind in natural areas.** Garbage damages plants, pollutes the environment and may introduce invasive species.
- ✓ **Landscape with native plant species** from local seed-stock supplied by a reputable garden centre.
- ✓ **Learn about stewardship activities** in your area and actively participate in protecting Species at Risk. To find more information about stewardship activities in your area, contact your local Stewardship Council or Conservation Authority.
- ✓ **Take advantage of the Environmental Farm Plan program.** To learn more, contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources or the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
- ✓ **If you have Species at Risk** on your property, you may be eligible for stewardship programs or financial incentives that support the protection and recovery of Species at Risk and their habitats. Contact the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for more information.
- ✓ **Report any illegal activity** related to plants and wildlife to 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)

Status

Spoon-leaved Moss is listed as Endangered nationally and provincially. It is illegal to kill, harm or collect the species, or to destroy its habitat in Ontario.

Carolinian Canada Coalition is working with local Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Offices, Conservation Authorities and other Non-Governmental Organizations to recover Species at Risk.

You can help the recovery efforts by protecting this species and its habitat.

Good sources of information

Carolinian Canada Coalition:

www.carolinian.org

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources:

Includes information about Ontario Species at Risk
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/

Natural Heritage Information Centre

<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>

Find your local Conservation Authority Office:

www.conservationontario.ca

Government of Canada Species at Risk Public Registry:

www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Find your local Stewardship Council:

www.ontariostewardship.org

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Includes information about the Environmental Farm Plan

ontariosoilcrop.org

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