

# Sphagnum



## peatmoss

Family Sphagnaceae

Type Native

WIS Code OBL CoC 7

### DESCRIPTION

Mat-forming moss growing in cushion-like clumps or extensive patches. Stems (to 10 cm long) are topped with clusters of branchlets creating a small tree-like appearance (about 3 cm wide). Lower branchlets are drooping, while upper ones are more erect. Leaves are tiny, slightly toothed and usually light green, but some species have yellow, red, purple, or brown leaves. The cellular structure allows the moss to absorb water like a sponge.



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### SPORES

Sporophytes, only occasionally seen, have deep dark red globe-like capsules on short stalks.

### HABITAT

Acidic soils of bogs, fens, seeps, seepage swamps and stream banks.

### SIMILAR SPECIES

Twenty or more species of *Sphagnum* are found in West Virginia. A few examples are shown here. *Polytrichum*, haircap moss, is the second most common wetland moss genus.



*S. palustre*

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*S. magellanicum*

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*S. girgensohnii*

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*Polytrichum commune*

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