

Discovering and naming bryophytes and lichens

Time required: 25 – 30 minutes **Location:** woodland

Equipment: Recording sheet, pencil and magnifying glass each.
A camera that can be shared.

Aim

- Recognise differences between bryophytes and lichens
- Describe bryophytes and lichens

Subject
Science and
Technology

Skills:
Literacy

Plant names — Background

For centuries people have used their own names for plants based on their characteristics or their uses.

If you research the names used for common plants you may well find that there are many names for an individual plant.

For example, the Llên Natur project lists all these Welsh names for the plant that I call 'Dal y Poethion' in Welsh and Stinging Nettle in English.

Urtica dioica is the Latin name.

Danhadlen boeth, Danadl poethion, Danhadlen, Dail Poethion, Danadl Cyffredin, Danadl Poethion, Danadl Ysgar, Danadlen, Danadlen Fwyaf, Danadlen Ysgar, Dryned, Dynaid, Dynat, Dyned, Dynent, Dynhaden, Dynhaden Fwyaf, Dynhaden Ysgar

[Llên Natur page for *Urtica dioica*](#)



The latin name for plants and animals should be written in *italics*, using a capital letter for the first name and a lower-case letter for the second name!

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Latin names — the need for standard names

There are standard scientific names in Latin for all species. Using the Latin name is important so we can identify exactly which species we are referring to in any other language. As there are sometimes more than one names for a species in the same language it ensures everyone understands which species is being referred to.

For example, some Welsh speakers in the North use the name 'broga' for 'toad' and 'llyffant' for 'frog'. However, in other areas 'broga' is used for 'frog' and 'llyffant' for a toad!

['llyffant' entry in the Bangor University Dictionary](#)

Introducing the task:

- Introduce the pupils to bryophytes and lichens in advance using the video and the lower plants presentation and/ or out in the woods.
- Explain to the pupils, using the information above, the background about using common names and Latin names for animals and plants.
- Agree an area within the woods that you are going to use
- Explain to the pupils that they will have a designated amount of time to look for as many bryophytes and lichen as they can within a set area (e.g 10 minutes)
- Then the pupils will need to choose a bryophyte or a lichen they would like to get to know better—try and ensure a range of different examples are chosen amongst the group.
- Explain that they are going to be scientists, and they will need to make a details record of the bryophyte or lichen and choose an appropriate name for it.
- Distribute the recording sheets, pencils and magnifying glasses
- You may like to use the example recording sheet complete for Black –Eyed Susan so they understand what is required
- Make sure you take a photo of each bryophyte/lichen that the pupils are recording. Try and take at least two photos including one of the whole plant and another one that is a close up showing the key characteristics of the species.
- After spending time getting to know the bryophyte or lichen, choose a name for it and write it on the recording sheet.

Why not introduce the moss/lichen to the class explaining why you chose this name for it?



COEDWIGOEDD
GLAW CELTAIDD
CYMRU
CELTIC
RAINFORESTS
WALES

