

**COMMUNITY EVENT | The Miniature Plants of Eastern CT with Dr. Bernard Goffinet**

**Saturday October 7, 2023**

**10am-12pm**

Sign-in begins at 9:45am at the trailhead for the HEEP, Hillside Environmental Education Park, 159 Discovery Drive, Storrs, CT

The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History is excited to have moss expert Dr. Bernard Goffinet once again take us on a guided tour of “**The Miniature Plants of Eastern CT**”! Dr. Goffinet, from the University of Connecticut’s Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, will lead a short hike through the HEEP to introduce us to the miniature forest of mosses that can be found right below your feet. Participants will explore, discover, and hear stories about the native mosses in these amazing miniature ecosystems. Hike will include some forays off trail to hunt for mosses, so sturdy footwear and long pants are recommended.

**\*\*\* This event is FREE and open to the public, but registration is REQUIRED and space is limited! \*\*\***  
Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs/> for more information and to register.

**Participants aged 16 and under must be accompanied by a chaperone.**

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or [CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu](mailto:CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu) by **Monday October 2, 2023**.

This Walktober event is sponsored by the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, a unit of the Institute of the Environment at the University of Connecticut. More info about Walktober can be found at [thelastgreenvalley.org](http://thelastgreenvalley.org).

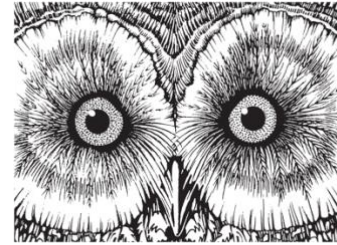
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Discover the Miniature Plants Beneath Your Feet with Moss Expert at UConn Storrs**

Uncover the diversity and natural history of the mosses of eastern Connecticut with local biologist Dr. Bernard Goffinet and the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History.

Storrs, CT – The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History will host a “moss walk” at UConn Storrs on Saturday, October 7, from 10am to noon as part of The Last Green Valley’s Walktober program. This is the second year this event will be held, and Dr. Bernard Goffinet from the UConn Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology will be joining us once again to lead the walk.



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OF NATURAL HISTORY

Dr. Goffinet will take participants on a short hike in the 165-acre parcel known as the HEEP, or [Hillside Environmental Education Park](#), at UConn. The HEEP is managed by UConn's Office of Sustainability and consists of uplands, meadows, woodlands, and wetlands around Cedar Swamp Brook.

[Dr. Goffinet](#) is a faculty member in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut. He studies a group of plants called bryophytes, also known as mosses, liverworts, and hornworts. Bryophytes reflect an alternative way to succeed on land compared to more charismatic vascular plants. Unlike most flowering plants, bryophytes can often survive significant water loss as well as freezing temperatures. In our region, bryophytes thrive in many environments from stone walls to rocks immersed in rivers, to tree trunks and branches. They may grow primarily during the milder fall and spring seasons, lay dormant during the summer, and hold on to their leaves during the winter.

Hikers will explore, discover, and hear stories about the native mosses and lichens found in the woods and trails of eastern Connecticut. This guided hike will provide participants with opportunities to examine real specimens up close with hand lenses. Dr. Goffinet will also share tips for identifying mosses in the field, so you can uncover the mosses hiding in your own backyard!

This Walktober event is presented by the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, and compliments the exhibit "Right Below Your Feet," currently on view in the Wilbur Cross Building at UConn, Storrs. Walktober is a project of The Last Green Valley and more Walktober events can be found at [thelastgreenvalley.org](http://thelastgreenvalley.org)

The event is free and open to the public, but registration is required, and space is limited! The program is open to all, but children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. This hike may be challenging for some and will include hilly areas and some forays off trail to hunt for mosses. Sturdy footwear and long pants are recommended. Rain date is Sunday October 8, 2023 from 10am-12pm.

Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs/> for more information and to register.

If you require accommodations to participate or have questions, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or [CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu](mailto:CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu) by **Monday October 2, 2023**.

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