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A SAMPLE PAGE

Pay particular attention to notes and arrows highlighting essential characters of a moss.

Is your moss wet or dry?
It can look quite different.

If your specimen fits the **Key Features** of a pleurocarp with lance-shaped leaves without a midrib, for example, flip to the pages with these tabs along the edge.



Wet



Dry

Wiry, thread-like mats are formed from creeping shoots covered in tiny leaves



P. subtilis
upright capsule,
with lid



P. confervoides
bent capsule,
with lid




Platydictya confervoides



Platydictya subtilis

ALGAL THREAD MOSS

APPEARANCE: Small creeping moss that forms patches of stiff, thin threads with tiny green leaves. When wet, they appear dull green and flare out at 75 degrees, when dry they are slightly shiny and pressed to stems except for their wispy tips.

LEAVES: Tiny lances, $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mm long with narrow tips. Midrib is lacking, but too small to verify with hand lens. Edges are smooth.

CAPSULES: Short-cylindrical, about 1 mm long, upright, with a conical lid. Stalk 7-12 mm tall.

HABITAT: Tree trunk bases and bare roots, sometimes on fallen logs.

SIMILAR SPECIES

***Platydictya confervoides*, ALGAL ROCK MOSS:** Grows on calcareous rocks rather than tree bark. Capsules are bent or curved.

Hygroamblystegium varium (p. 213) Is a similarly stringy, small, creeping moss but its leaves have a midrib and are about twice the size, 1-2 mm long.

Leskea gracilescens (p. 263) Leaves are pointed egg-shaped without a drawn out narrow tip. They also have a midrib.

MICROSCOPIC FEATURES

Leaf edges are free of even minute teeth. Cells near tip of leaf in *P. subtilis* are relatively long, being 3-5× longer than wide versus at most 2-3× in *P. confervoides*.

Compare your capsules to those illustrated, but remember: they might be at different developmental stages, with or without their lid or hood.

Check the information regarding the general appearance, leaves, capsules, and typical habitat.