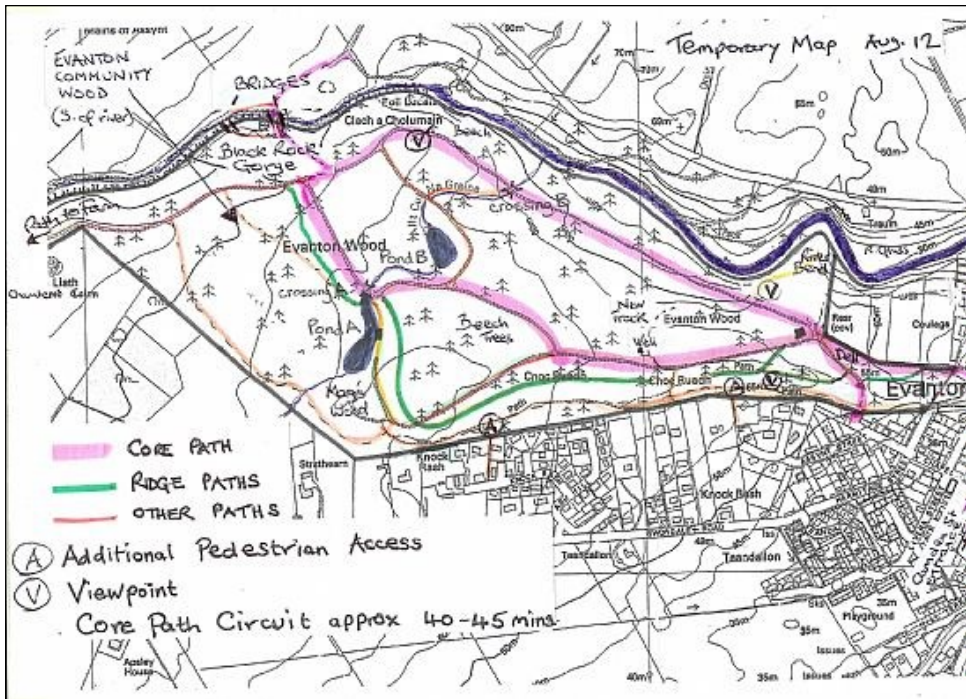


# Mosses and Liverworts In Evanton Wood



**Evanton Wood**, a 70 hectare mixed coniferous and deciduous wood was bought by Evanton Wood Community Trust in August 2012. The purchase of the wood and funding for a five year project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Kiltarn Community Council Windfarm and Ben Tharsuinn Funds, Co-op Big Community Vote, Robertson Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Technip, Isleburn/Global, Highland Council Discretionary Fund, Highland Council Landfill Community Fund/EBS, Scottish Natural Heritage and individual donations and fund-raising.



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Above: Dave Genney shows two of the commoner mosses from the pine woodland floor in Evanton Wood. In his left hand, the **Big Shaggy-moss** (or to give it its scientific name, **Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus**), and in his right hand the more slender **Red-stemmed Feather-moss** (or **Pleurozium schreberi**). As its name suggests, the latter moss has a distinctive red stem.

Left: Pine tree trunks are dominated by lichens. One of the commonest is the **Duvet-lichen** (**Hypogymnia physoides**). The common name comes from the fact that each 'frond' is made up of an upper and lower layer to form lots of small pockets like a duvet. The powdery blue/green lichen at the bottom of this photo is called **Dust-lichen**



Above: Where damp logs have not been covered by large mosses, they are often colonised by tiny liverworts such as **Palmate Germanderwort** (**Riccardia palmata**) and the descriptively named **Rustwort** (**Nowellia curvifolia**). Both can be seen here with the green hand-like fronds of Germanderwort standing out against the red/brown Rustwort. The area covered by this photo is only just over an inch across, so you have to look closely to see these handsome plants!



Left: If you look carefully up the trunks of large beech trees along the River Glass, you might be lucky enough to see large lobes of the lichen **Tree Lungwort** (**Lobaria pulmonaria**). This is quite a rare species this far east. Its common name comes from the belief that it could be used to cure lung problems, but this is only because it happens to look like a lung and is not based on any medical evi-





Above: Keep an eye out for bright yellow patches of the **Candle Lichen** (*Chrysothrix candelaris*). It tends to grow on the drier parts of tree trunks such as on the east facing side or on trunks under large branches. If you have a magnifying glass, take a close look at these yellow patches because you might see the tiny bristles of the Green Pinhead lichen (*Calicium viride*)...see the next photo.



Left: The tiny fruits of the **Green Pinhead-lichen** (*Calicium viride*) are only a mm tall, but can be found with a magnifying lens amongst the much more obvious **Candle Lichen** (previous photo). Try looking edge-way on along the trunk without a magnifying lens and you might even be able to see the fruits as stubble-like bristles if you have a keen eye!



Left: The black fungus covering the trunks of beech trees here is called **As-codichaena rugosa**. It doesn't have a common name, but if it did, perhaps 'Beech soot-fungus' would be a good one!

Below: Forest track side banks provide the perfect home to **Cladonia** lichens (seen here as a blue/green growth on the soil). Lichens are composed of two species, a fungus and an alga, although they are always named after the fungal partner. The mosses above are typical of the pine woodland floor and are dominated by 'Big Shaggy-moss' or to give it its scientific name, **Rhytidia-delphus triquetrus**.







Above: The **Duvet Lichen** (*Hypogymnia physodes*) is common on tree trunks throughout Evanton Woods, particularly on conifer trees. You will be lucky to find it fruiting though as in this photos.



Left: The smaller branches of conifer trees in Evanton Wood are festooned with lichens. The commonest are **Usea (Old Man's Beard)** species and **Pseudevernia furfuracea (Antler Lichen or False Evernia)**. The latter is branched and has a rough upper side and black underside. The prevalence of these lichens is a good indicator of clean air



Left: The bark has fallen off this dead, standing tree to reveal the likely cause of its demise. The distinctive dark boot-strap laces of a **Honey Fungus** (*Armillaria*) entwine the trunk. This fungus can kill healthy trees and enter the wood if bark is damaged. Although in rare cases these fungi can be a problem for foresters, they provide important deadwood habitat for a range of insects, birds, lichens, mosses and, eventually, other fungi.



Left: The base of this tree has been colonised by the distinctive **Mouse-tail Moss** (*Isoetes myosuroides*). Each stem is tree-like and forms dense cushions.





Left: Many types of bracket fungi can be found on the trunks of trees in the woods. This one is past it's best so can't be identified to species.

Below: *Armillaria rhizomorphs*



**Left: The Antler Lichen (*Pseudevernia furfuracea*)** can be found growing on the small branches of conifer trees at Evanton Wood. This lichen is harvested in some parts of Europe to help make perfume (as a fixative). Look out for the tiny pegs on the upper surface of the fronds. They are designed to brush off and disperse to establish new colonies



Left: Willows are common in Evanton Wood, particularly in wetter areas. Common woodland floor mosses creep up the base of trunks while more specialist 'epiphytes' such as **Bristle-mosses and Pincushion-mosses (*Orthotrichum* and *Ulota* respectively)** can be seen further up the trunk and along branches.





Above: Small cushions of the **Crisped Pincushion moss (*Ulota crispa*)** are common on trunks and branches of deciduous trees throughout Evanton Wood. When dry the leaves curl tightly around the stem, but unfurl quickly when wet. The capsules seen here produce thousands of spores so that the moss can colonise new trees elsewhere.



Above: The aptly named **Ostrich-plume Feather-moss (*Ptilidium cristacastrensis*)** can be found on the floor of older areas of Evanton Wood. It is distinct from other 'feather-mosses' by having upright fronds with many neat, closely spaced branches. It indicates that woodland has been present here for a long time.



Left: This robust moss is called **Common Haircap (*Polytrichum commune*)**, although I like to call it Bottle-brush moss for obvious reasons! The tough shoots can grow up to 40 cm long. When dry, the leaves curl around the stem but if you wet them, they will unfurl in front of your eyes. It grows in wetter areas of Evanton Wood.



Left: Old stumps provide a convenient home to woodland floor mosses because they are less likely to be covered by leaf litter. This stump has been colonised by **Common Tamarisk-moss (*Thuidium tamariscinum*)**. It differs from the less common Ostrich-plume feather-moss by having an extra level of branching and the 'feathers' don't stand upright.