

NAME OF HORTICULTURE THERAPY PRESENTATION ACTIVITY:

MOSS GARDEN



OBJECTIVES:

EDUCATION:

There is nothing in the forest as rich and velvety as a carpet of moss. There are over 20,000 species of moss. Moss is a special type of plant called a bryophyte. Moss has no roots and does not require a lot of soil or fertilizer. What you're seeing as you look at a mat of it are leaves and stems that directly absorb water and nutrients. Moss is relatively easy to grow. Moss needs two things to grow: daylight (not direct sun) and moisture. The more often it gets water, the faster it grows, but it doesn't need deep watering. Moss on pot will usually stay moist from the surface perspiration produced by watering the plants.

ACTIVITY

This horticulture activity seeks to provide participants with opportunities for experiencing a sense of purpose, feelings of well-being, and mastery of the task. And, seeks to improve components of movement, physical, cognitive and social functioning. Participants will follow step-by step directions to create their own moss garden. Participants will have the opportunity to touch moss, soil, and select a growing surface. Participant will complete the moss garden project. Participant will be provided the opportunity to express level of satisfaction with finished project.

TAKE AWAY

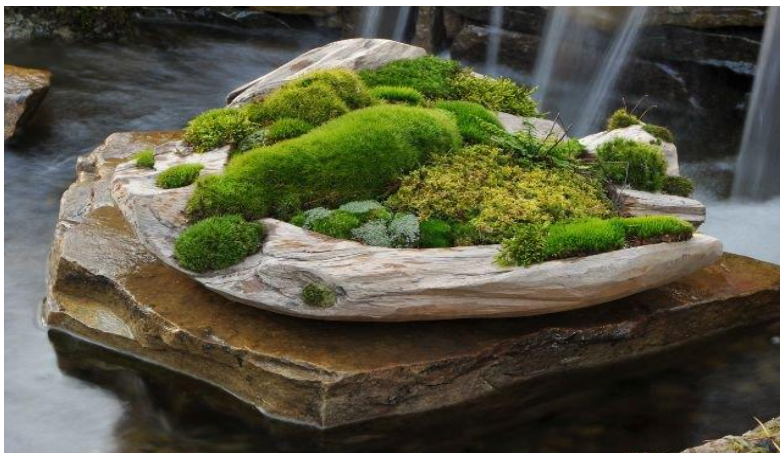
This horticulture group activity seeks to provide participants with opportunities for experiencing a sense of purpose, feelings of well-being, and mastery of the task. And, seeks to improve components of movement, physical, cognitive and social functioning. Participants will follow step-by step directions to create their own moss garden. Participants will have the opportunity to touch plants, soil, moss, rocks and other items from nature, and select a garden dish. Participant will complete the moss garden

project. Participant will be provided the opportunity to express level of satisfaction with finished project.

MATERIALS:

Typical number of participants is eight (8). It is not unusual to have more (mostly family members) or less.

- Porous pot, terra-cotta, concrete, stone or driftwood
- Find a wide, shallow container. Concrete or terracotta pots work well because they keep the soil cool, but other containers are also acceptable.



- Fresh moss



- Gloves -Although moss isn't harmful to the touch, protect your hands from dirt.
- Spray bottle - Used both for watering and to increase the humidity in your moss garden
- Potting soil - To mimic the soil condition that mosses like, the first layer is one of crushed stone or gravel. Once that has been laid, the next layer consists of good potting soil, one without fertilizer, or seasoned compost.
- Small stones, forest branches or a variety of small items for decoration



- Participant name tags
- Two completed project forms. One, for BRI- the other mailed to the Extension Office

DURING CLASS

Project leader will introduce self and information regarding the UA Master Gardener program. Each Master Gardener will introduce them self and share a personal & brief account of their gardening expertise, a gardening experience, or Master Gardener affiliation. Participants will be encouraged, but not required, to introduce them self and share their gardening interest. An introduction to the program and brief introduction to mosses will be provided. A section of moss will be passed around for tactile and scent stimulation. Using a completed moss garden project, a description of the project and key steps will be introduced. Master Gardeners will oversee attendees' participation and assist only as needed. Encourage participants to try different ways of designing their rock garden with moss.

INFORMATION/DESCRIPTION/FACTS



Musci

Musci are what most people typically refer to as mosses. The distinguishing factor of a musci moss is the clear differentiation between their leaves and stems. Some varieties have stems that are upright, while others have stems that are matted down on the surface of the ground. The most common musci mosses are sphagnum and Hypnaceae, and they are wonderful for use as soil amendments.



Hepaticae

Hepaticae, also known as liverworts, are identifiable by how soft they are to the touch. They do well in shady areas near water, and prefer high humidity. If you live in a low humidity or drier area, you'll need to give extra care to your Hepaticae plants if you want them to do well.



Anthocerotae

Anthocerotae, also known as hornworts, are the third type of bryophyte. They're readily distinguishable by their pointed branches that bear all of their spores. Like Hepaticae, they prefer damp, high-humidity environments, but they also like a reasonable amount of sun. Anthocerotae are also the rarest type of moss, with the fewest species of the three.

Growing moss in plant pots is easy. A wide, shallow container, concrete or terracotta pot work best because they keep the soil cool, but other containers or objects from nature are acceptable. Gather your moss. Look for moss in your own garden, often found in damp spots under a dripping faucet or in a shady corner. To harvest moss, simply peel it from the ground. Don't worry if it breaks into pieces or chunks. Don't over harvest. Leave a good amount in place so the moss colony can regenerate itself. Remember that moss is a relatively slow-growing plant. Fill the pot with a good quality commercial potting soil. Mound the potting soil so the top is rounded. Moisten the potting mix lightly with a spray bottle. Tear the moss into small pieces, and then press it firmly onto the moist potting soil. The most important part of caring for moss is watering it appropriately. Unlike many other plants, it requires more care with regards to watering as we can see from its natural environments. Moss has no root system to pull moisture from the soil, so all of its water must be taken from the atmosphere and environment. When watering your moss, you can either mist it, soak it, or water it with a shower nozzle watering can. The key here is to water only when your moss needs it – typically when the color is faded and it's dry to the touch. You do *not* need to fertilize moss. In fact, fertilizing it with a strong nutrient solution will actually cause it to turn brown and die.

Container Grown Moss – How to Grow Moss in A Pot

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/foilage/moss/container-grown-moss.htm>

- Mist daily to keep moist
- Dried moss or lichens can be used but are not as lush as fresh moss
- Contrary to popular belief, buttermilk is not needed for ph. It's a good sticking agent

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

How to Make a Moss Garden

1. Allow participant to select containers if they vary. Otherwise, containers to each participant. Any assortment of shallow container material like driftwood or small grooved rocks, a stone or a shallow bowl can be used. No need for drainage.
2. Participants will add a small layer of pea gravel to the bottom of the dish.
3. Participants will create a base with potting soil
4. Participants will choose enough moss to cover the top of their container and transplant the moss into the pot
5. Instruct participants to gently push the moss to connect with the bare soil to make the base look like a forest floor
6. Participants will mist the moss.
7. Participants will add decorative/nature items as mentioned above.

To give a porous pot a woodsy patina

1. Select any porous pot
2. Harvest fresh moss or buy live moss sheets
3. Remove soil and debris from the moss then shred the moss into small fragments. The moss is torn up to trigger new growth
4. Pour buttermilk into a container, stir in the moss pieces. A good ratio is 2 parts buttermilk to 1 part moss (you can also use a blender)
5. With a paintbrush, apply the buttermilk-moss mixture to the pot. If the mixture is too runny, add more shredded moss to thicken. Set in a shady damp place and spritz often.



HANDOUTS

- Garden know-how, Moss media
- Moss Appeal

SOURCE REFERENCES

- *Moss Appeal*, Better Homes and Gardens, January 2013, page 38-43
- BHG.com/Moss Picture (video)
- *Moss Media*, Better Homes and Gardens, August 2013, page 80
- Sprouthome.com Read more at Gardening Know How: Container Grown Moss – How To Grow Moss In A Pot <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/foilage/moss/container-grown-moss.htm>