Course analysis BJOR73 Bryophyte morphology and identification ht 2018

Course leader: Nils Cronberg
Other teachers: Olof Åström (course assistant), Torbjörn Tyler

Number of students: 9 registered students

Grades: 1 Fail (U plan to finish next year), 2 Pass (G), 6 Pass w distinction (VG).

Evaluation

I. Summary of the course evaluation
   Number of answers: 7
   Short summary of the result: Overall the students were very pleased with the course (grade 4.1). The students especially appreciated the help from teachers and assistants (grade 4.7), and the field week, but suggested improvement regarding more time for microscopic work and somewhat poor kitchen facilities at Stensoffa. Also the supplementary course book was more appreciated than the primary one.

II. Comments from the teachers team
   The teachers on the course considered that the course was successful, with engaged and ambitious students. We were very lucky with the weather and the bryophytes were in a better condition than could have been expected after the dry summer. The students were somewhat more of beginners than usual and some were at times a bit frustrated regarding difficult determinations. It was sometimes hard to convince students not to work in teams of two. We try to avoid this since we know that the individual skills are impaired, when one of the students usually takes the lead. Overall, the students were doing their best and the working atmosphere was good.

III. Evaluation of changes made since the previous course
   We did not make any major changes this time. Olof Åström was course assistant for the first time and did a great job. We improved the information about the field week to prevent some complaints from last year regarding food preparation at Stensoffa. We also provided a list of the most important terminology for determination (in addition to what is written in the text book). The second assignment was updated with a new article for reading and commenting.

IV. Suggested changes for the next course

   • We plan to replace the textbook (which is getting outdated and is regarded to be “boring” by some students) with texts from the book that has been used as a supplementary book so far (Bryophyte ecology). Bryophyte ecology is an open access net-based textbook, which has been expanded during recent years to cover most of the relevant information for the course.

   • We also plan to give the students a new pre-excursion assignment, meaning that they are supposed to collect a certain number of characteristic species (known or unknown) from their home area and bring them to the field week for determination.
• Certain light microscopes had fixed oculars, which meant that we had to have an additional microscope for measuring purposes. This was somewhat inconvenient. We will try to check for this when selecting the microscopes next year.

• If we have a similar situation next year, with many beginners and few advanced students, we may reduce the number of collected species, especially the more difficult ones. Also, one of the study plots for the exercise at the end of the field week, was a bit too advanced and may be replaced for an easier one.

• LUVIT is going to be replaced, so the study material will have to be adapted for the new platform. It is uncertain how much additional work this will mean.

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