

Oak Moss Profile

Also known as

Evernia prunastri

Introduction

Oak Moss is a lichen which grows in many mountainous temperate forests throughout the northern hemisphere, including areas of Spain, Portugal, France, North America, and much of Central Europe. Mostly found on the trunk and branches of oak trees, Oak Moss can also be found on the bark of other trees such as fir and pine. The thalli of Oak Moss are short (3-4 cm in length) and bushy, and grows in sizeable clumps. Oak Moss thallus is flat and strap-like. They are branched and resemble deer antlers in form. Oak Moss ranges in color from green to a greenish-white when dry, and dark olive to yellowish-green when wet. The texture of Oak Moss is rough when dry and rubbery when wet. It is widely used in modern perfumery.

Constituents

Lichenol, chloroatranol, atranol.

Parts Used

Thalli (whole lichen).

Typical Preparations

Extracts and absolutes of the whole lichen are used in perfumery as a base note and fragrance fixative.

Summary

Oak Moss is grown and harvested commercially in South-Central Europe, and is typically exported to the Grasse region of France for extraction of its fragrant compounds. The resulting extracts and absolutes are often used as perfume fixatives and as base notes in many fragrances. The lichen has a distinctive and complex scent that can be described as woody, sharp and faintly sweet. Oak Moss found on pine trees has a distinct turpentine odor that is valued in certain perfume formulas.

Precautions

Avoid using Oak Moss if you have skin sensitization issues. Not for internal use.