

【Luminous Moss】

Luminous moss (*Schistostega pennata*) is found throughout the Northern Hemisphere in gullies, caves, and other environments with soft, damp soil and low-light conditions where few other plants survive. Its spherical cells reflect light as a greenish-gold glow, earning it the nickname “goblin gold.” A wire fence was erected here to protect the moss from animals. Though luminous moss has long grown at the main shrine on Mt. Naeba, its appearance here was first noted around the year 2000. Since luminous moss is rare at such low elevations, parishioners believe that its sudden appearance represents the blessing of the enshrined deities. The moss is best viewed from June through early July.