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Moss is effective in solving crimes, says study – 8th January 2026

Level 0

The police use fingerprints, CCTV, and DNA to find criminals. A new study shows that moss is also useful. In the study, scientists looked at when the police used moss to help solve crimes. One scientist said he wanted the police to understand more about how important and useful moss was.

Moss first helped the police in 1929. In 2013, moss on a man's shoes helped the police to find where the man's baby was buried. The baby's father was put in prison for murdering his baby. Another scientist said she wanted the police to understand more about how moss can help them in their work.

Level 1

The police use fingerprints, CCTV, and DNA to find criminals. A new study shows that moss is also useful in police investigations. In the study, scientists looked at all the cases in which the police used moss to help solve crimes. Lead scientist Dr Matt von Konrat said he wanted the police to understand more about moss. He wrote: "We're hoping that our study helps show how important these tiny plants can be."

Moss first helped the police in 1929. In 2013, scientists found moss on a man's shoes. This helped the police to find where the man's baby was buried. Dr von Konrat said: "Based on the bits of moss, we knew what sort of micro-habitat we were looking for." The baby's father was convicted of murder. Another forensic scientist said she wanted the police to understand more about how moss can help them in their work.

Level 2

The police often use fingerprints, CCTV, and DNA to find criminals. A new study shows that moss is also used. Moss grows everywhere. These tiny plants can help in police investigations. The study is in the journal Forensic Sciences Research. Scientists looked at all the cases in which moss was used to help solve crimes. Lead scientist Dr Matt von Konrat said: "We wanted to highlight the significance of botanical evidence because...investigators may be overlooking it." He added: "We're hoping that our study helps show how important these tiny plants can be."

The earliest reported case of moss helping the police was in 1929. Moss on a skeleton helped police know when a person had died. In 2013, scientists found moss on a man's shoes. This helped the police to find where the man's baby was buried. Dr von Konrat found the baby's body. He said: "Based on the bits of moss, we knew what sort of micro-habitat we were looking for." The father was convicted of murder. Forensic scientist Jenna Merkel said: "We aim to raise awareness of forensic botany." She wants the police to understand how moss can help them in their work.

Level 3

The police have many different ways to find criminals. The most well-known are fingerprints, CCTV, and DNA. A new study shows that moss is used to solve crimes. Moss grows everywhere. Scientists say these tiny plants can be big clues in police investigations. The scientists' research is in the latest edition of the journal Forensic Sciences Research. The scientists looked at all the cases in which moss was used to help solve crimes. Lead author Dr Matt von Konrat said: "We wanted to highlight the significance of botanical evidence because...investigators may be overlooking it." He added: "We're hoping that our study helps show how important these tiny plants can be."

The earliest reported case of police using moss to help in an investigation was in 1929. The amount of moss on a skeleton helped police know when the person had died. In 2013, scientists analyzed tiny bits of moss on a man's shoes. This helped to find where the man's baby daughter was buried. Dr von Konrat led a team that found the girl's body. He said: "Based on the bits of moss, we knew what sort of micro-habitat we were looking for." The father was convicted of murder. Study author and forensic scientist Jenna Merkel said: "Through this paper, we aim to raise awareness of forensic botany." She wants the police to better understand how moss can help during investigations.