

## **A study of the Darhad Valley's moss species**

*Enkhjargal, Moss Biologist at the Mongolian Institute of Botany*

Previous research of moss within the Khuvsgul region included Russian scientist A.A.Elenkin's identification of 98 moss species in 1902. Prior to this, Mongolian scientist Ts.Tsegmed had identified 92 moss species from the region. Hence, a detailed study of moss was necessary for the Khuvsgul region. Our project began in the summer of 2006 and continued this past summer with the help of BioRegions Program and Dr. Cliff Montagne. During the study, I identified 158 moss species within the region. This number might be increased by further studies.

This past summer's fieldwork consisted of 50 days. We collected 875 samples of moss from 16 points from different ecological regions. These collection sites were located in RENCHINKHUNBE, Ulaan-Uul, and Tsagaan-Nuur soums and Ulaan-khad mountain. Of these samples, 158 moss species were identified. Of these moss species, 42 are new to the Khuvsgul region, and 2 are new to Mongolia. This brings the total recorded moss species to 234 within this region. All of these moss samples are able to be stored by the Herbarium fund of the Institute of Botany. We plan to write scientific reports for publication of the study.

In addition to the study, we were introduced to local citizens of the region. Darkhad, Khalkha and Tsaatan nations live in the Darhad Valley. I am personally interested in the tradition, culture and legacy of the local nations such as the Tsaatan and Darkhad. These peoples have a well down knowledge and usages of medicinal plants. We also applied the knowledge gained from the study in educational materials for the Darhad Valley's Blue Valley Awards.

In conclusion the activities of the Bioregions Program are important to the Darhad Valley and its local citizens. We would like to work with the project. Social-economic conditions and transportation of the area are difficult. For instance, there is no electricity, communication and information systems and the most important problem are the environmental issues of the area. The Bioregions Program focuses on these areas of concern and the associated projects are helping the local people to solve the issues as a community.