

### You have found a mite!

Use this guide to help you observe it.  
Oribatid mites are dark in colour, under bright light they will appear brown or red.

#### What to look for at x40

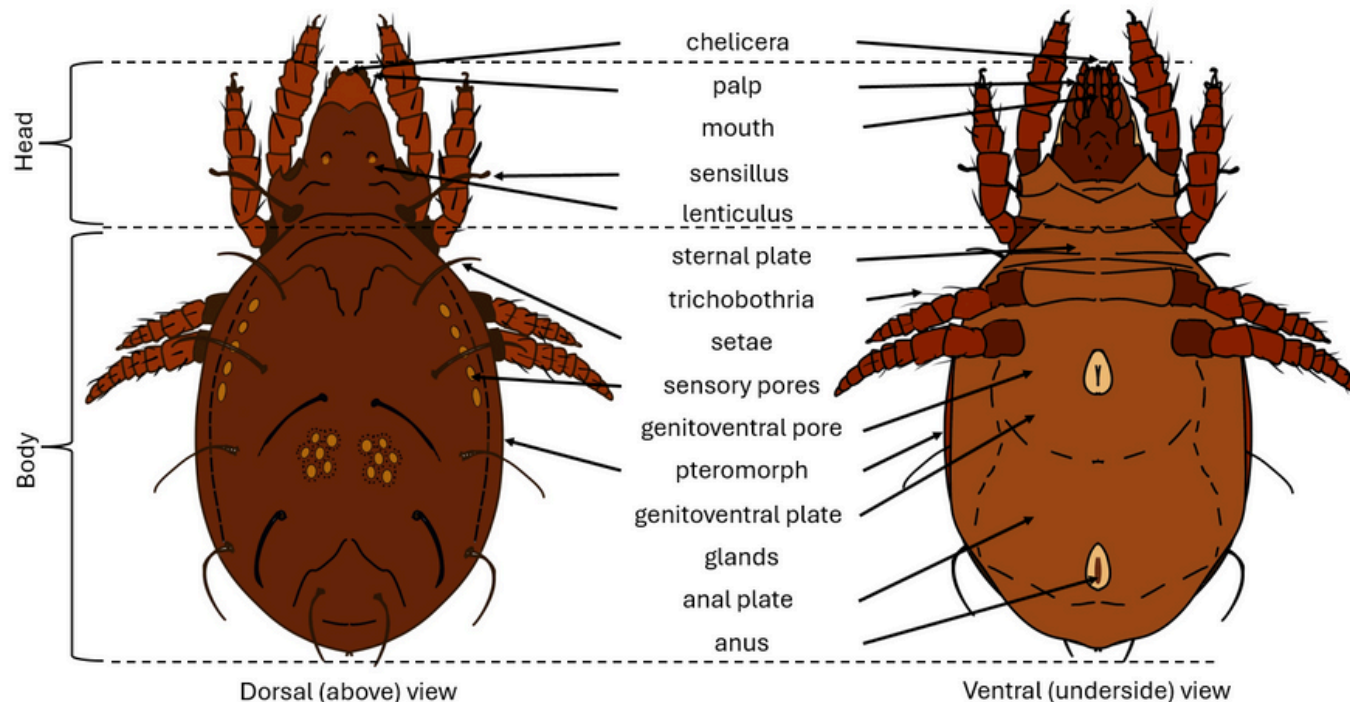
- Work out the orientation: above, underside or side view?
- Observe the thick hairs (setae) and thin hairs (trichobothria). The mites use these to sense the environment. Note their position on the body
- Note the distinct parts of the body including the three body plates .

#### What to look for at x100

- If you can see the underside, look for two pores in the exoskeleton.
- Focus on the texture of the exoskeleton. Look for striations and dimples in the surface.
- Closely observe the relative lengths of the mouth parts: chelicera and palps.

**Key word for further research:** Acaridae

Mites are about half to one millimetre long



#### Behaviour

Mites use hooks on the end to crawl through the moss. They use the lenticulus to detect light and move away from it. Stationary mites may be in a thanatotic state - acting and smelling dead.

#### Find out more

[www.mossafari.com](http://www.mossafari.com)  
A.Chandler-Grevatt (2025) *Moss Safari. Exploring the secret life in moss.* Pelagic Publishing

