

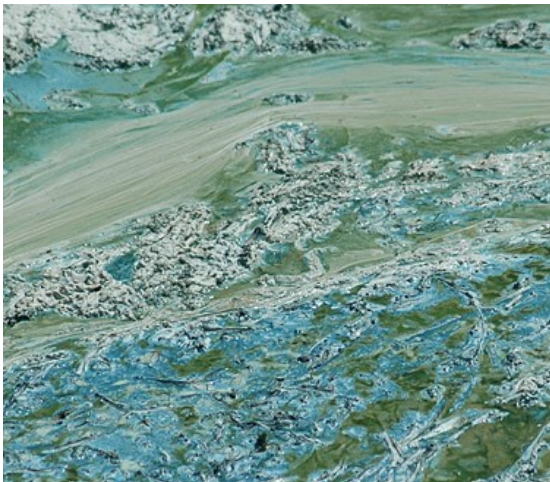
BLUE-GREEN ALGAE



Mary Waznin

Blue-green algae often start as small clumps.

Blue-green algae blooms often begin as small, rounded or fuzzy clumps of green in the water (above). As the bloom intensifies the clumps come together coating the water surface. At this point the blooms resemble pea soup. In areas with very high densities, or where the algae have washed ashore, there may be a paint-like bright blue sheen (below).



Blue-green algae along the shoreline often have an oily-looking sheen.

REPORT YOUR ALGAE SIGHTINGS

If you see a suspected algae bloom, please report it to the Lake Champlain Committee via our [online form](#) or call us at (802) 658-1414. Your information will help further understanding of Lake Champlain water conditions. Remember to avoid direct contact with algae blooms themselves, as it is not possible to visually determine if they contain toxins.

BECOME A MONITOR

Fill out our [online form](#) to become a summer blue-green algae monitor or attend a training session about blue-green algae.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[The Field Guide to Aquatic Phenomena](#) produced by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection has information and photos about objects that may float on the water.

During the summer months blue-green algae monitoring reports from LCC and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation are compiled on a [blue-green algae tracker map](#) hosted by the Vermont Department of Health.

For further information about blue-green algae visit websites of the [Lake Champlain Committee](#) and the [Vermont Department of Health](#).

The **Lake Champlain Committee** is a membership-supported, bi-state non-profit organization working since 1963 to protect Lake Champlain's health and accessibility through science-based advocacy, education and collaborative action. [We welcome your involvement!](#)



Lake Champlain Committee

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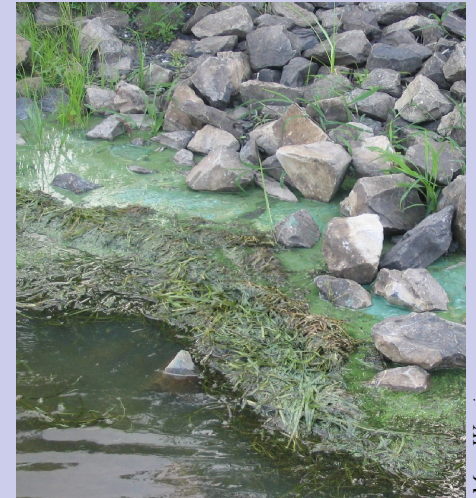
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RECOGNIZING BLUE-GREEN ALGAE IN LAKE CHAMPLAIN



Mary Waznin

Blue-green algae washed up along shoreline

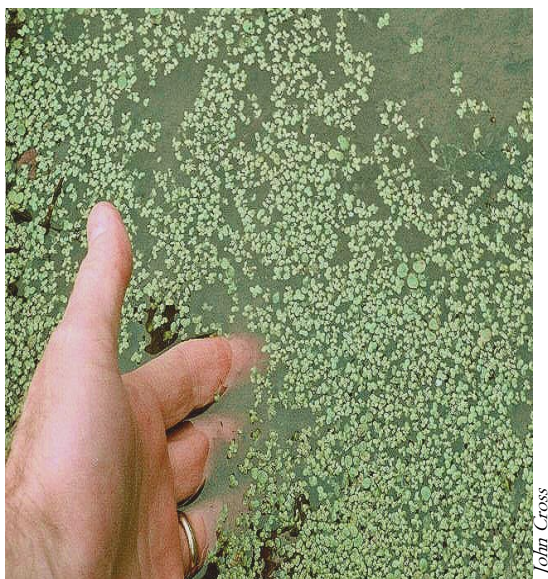
Blue-green algae blooms pose a health concern because of their potential to produce toxins. Not all algae blooms are blue-greens and not all blue-green blooms are toxic.

This flyer is a visual guide to help people distinguish blue-green algae from various types of floating phenomena that are often mistaken for it. The key should not be relied upon to determine whether or not a blue-green algae bloom contains toxins, that can only be determined through lab analysis of a water sample.

Since 2003, the **Lake Champlain Committee (LCC)** has trained citizen volunteers to monitor for blue-green algae at lakeshore locations. Monitors file weekly online reports that are relayed to local and state agencies. The program helps health, environmental and recreational officials assess the safety of our beaches. It also provides important data to help reduce the frequency of blooms.

FLOATING PHENOMENA THAT AREN'T BLUE-GREEN ALGAE BLOOMS

DUCKWEED



Duckweed, a plant unrelated to algae, appears algae-like when it proliferates and washes ashore, but you should be able to note that each speck is an individual flattened floating leaf, while blue-green algae have no leaves. There are a number of different species of duckweed, all in the family *Lemnaceae*. Duckweed is most common in sheltered bays and inlets.

OTHER ALGAE



Lake Champlain also experiences blooms of non-toxic green algae such as *Cladophora*. This species grows attached to rocks and breaks off in clumps that may appear brown or green and stringy. *Cladophora* do not form paint-like oily slicks. Other examples of algae that are not blue-greens may look like long green hairs, green clumps, yellowish clouds, or gelatinous brown balls.

POLLEN



Accumulations of pollen from pine and other trees may also appear algae-like. Pollen forms a film on the water, but unlike algae it is yellowish and will feel coarse to the touch rather than slimy. When pollen is abundant it will coat items on land as well as in the water. Pollen most often accumulates in spring and early summer.