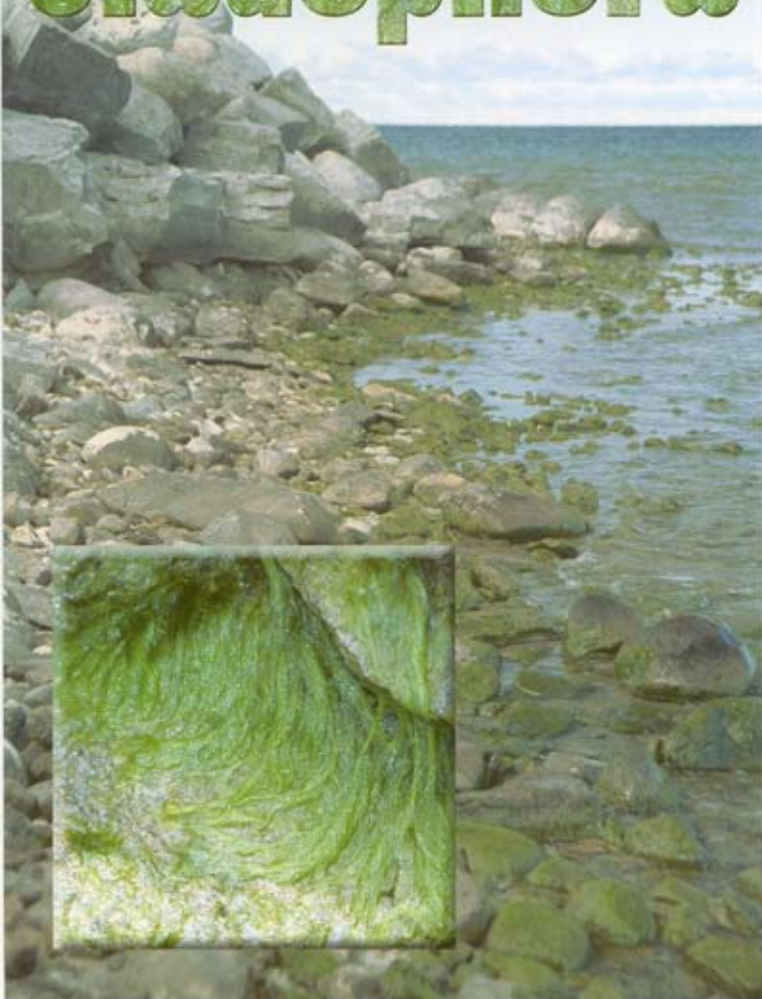


cladophora



What is Cladophora?

Cladophora is a branched, filamentous green algae that occurs naturally, usually in small amounts in Northern Michigan waters. It is found mostly in the wave splash zone and shallow shoreline areas of lakes, and is common in streams. It grows best on solid surfaces such as rocks, logs, and seawalls. The preferred water temperature is 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of this temperature preference, late May to early July, and September and October are the best times for its growth in Northern Michigan lakes.

Prominent growths of Cladophora occur when there are excessive nutrient inputs from both natural sources and human activity. Sources of these nutrients due to natural conditions include springs, streams, artesian wells, and wetland seepage. However, the majority of Cladophora growth can be traced to human activities such as lawn fertilization, septic systems, poor agricultural practices, and soil erosion.

Excessive nutrients, particularly phosphorus, can contribute to an overall decline in lake water quality. Cladophora can also indicate a potential health risk if it is the result of a malfunctioning septic system. Learning to identify Cladophora is the first step in preventing nutrients and other pollutants from decreasing the water quality of our lakes.

What you can do:

- Learn to identify Cladophora
- Use only fertilizers without phosphorus on shoreline properties
- Do not fertilize at all within 30 feet of the shoreline
- Use and maintain your septic system properly
- Keep a minimum 30-foot buffer strip of natural vegetation along the shoreline
- Control runoff and erosion in shoreline areas



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