

# ALGAE

## THE GOOD



1. Sunlight shines on waterbodies.

2. Algae uses sunlight and nutrients to produce oxygen and grow.

3. Algae is a food source for small fish, crabs and shrimp. Therefore, algae is important and needed in the food web of lakes.



However, sometimes there can be harmful consequences.

4. As a normal process, algae dies and sinks to the bottom where bacteria eat it.



## THE BAD

ALGAL BLOOM

7. During harmful algal blooms, algae can also damage fish gills, cause shading under a deep mat of the algae, and sometimes produce toxins. Fish that eat toxic algae can pass that toxin to humans.

6. If too much oxygen is taken out of the water, fish may not have enough to breathe and can die. If there is too much algae and bacteria multiply, the water can turn light or dark green, brown or red.

5. Bacteria use oxygen by taking it out of the water. If a lot of algae grows at once, it causes an algal bloom. If too much dies at once, too much oxygen can be taken out of the water.

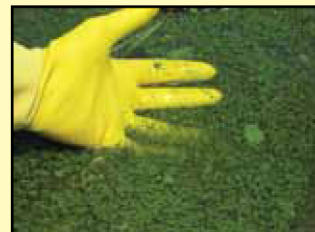
## IS IT OK TO GO FISHING, CRABBING OR SWIMMING DURING AN ALGAL BLOOM?

Most of the time it is fine to go fishing, crabbing and swimming, but be careful in the summer when you see a lot of coloration in the water or notice a strange smell.

### DUCKWEED IS NOT A PROBLEM



### HARMFUL ALGAE IS A PROBLEM



## WATER SAFETY

If you ever have a question about the safety of the water, please contact:

Wildlife and Fisheries:

1-800-256-2749

Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation:

1-504-836-2239

Or a scientist:

Dr. Sibel Bargu - [sbargu@lsu.edu](mailto:sbargu@lsu.edu)

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