



Gamiing Nature

When Aquatic Plants Become A Nuisance

Aquatic plants do more than just tangle up in boat propellers or swimmer's feet. They support the micro-organisms that fish require for food and they provide natural habitat and are the primary food source for aquatic birds.

Aquatic Plants are Essential to the Life of a lake

In addition to providing a source of oxygen in the water, aquatic plants help stabilize loose sediment and are an effective natural breakwater, keeping waves from eroding the shoreline. The spread of aquatic plants can be a natural process of lake evolution. As a lake gets older, an accumulation of nutrients in the



sediment causes an increased growth in aquatic plants called eutrophication. Some lakes are naturally eutrophic (Lake Scugog, Pigeon Lake and others). It is important to consider this before attempting to control vegetation growth.

Pollution and Erosion

Pollution and erosion are the two reasons for excessive plant and algae growth in lakes. When a lake receives an overload of nutrients from either sewage, added fertilizers leaching through the soil, or erosion, aquatic plants and algae tend to overgrow. This effect if multiplied in lakes that are already old and eutrophic, or naturally high in nutrients with a wide littoral zone (shoreline to a depth where the sun still hits the bottom) where aquatic plants grow. Eliminating sources of pollution and reducing erosion can help prevent the over-fertilization of plants in the lake.

A Special Note on the Use of Fertilizers

Remember, what goes on the lawn goes into the lake! That includes fertilizers applied to lawns near the water. Rain and irrigation will carry these fertilizers into the lake and encourage rapid and prolific growth of aquatic plants and algae.

Water Temperature

If the water temperature of the lake increases, aquatic plants will grow more rapidly. Increases in water temperature are mainly caused by the destruction of natural shoreline vegetation, which shades shallow waters from the heat of the sun.