



Kelp Lecture and workshop, March 7 and 10, 2012
Misconceptions

“Algae are plants.”

This is not true. Algae are not classified as plants.

Here are a few of the differences:

1. Algae are classified in Kingdom Protista and plants are their own Kingdom (Plantae).
2. Algae can be single celled or multicellular. Plants are all multicellular.
3. Algae are usually submerged in water and are able to absorb water and nutrients through any of their membranes. Plants have a vascular system to transport water and food around inside them to different parts of the organism.
4. Algae may have structures that look like roots, but they serve to attach the algae to hard surfaces and are thus called holdfasts; plants have true roots that are part of the vascular system of the plant that help transport water.

“Only non-native or invasive species grow or multiply out of control and take over a habitat or ecosystem.”

This is not true. Native species as well as non-native or invasive species can overrun a habitat or ecosystem. It is true that non-native organisms introduced to new habitats or ecosystems can multiply and grow out of control and take over its new home, but not all non-native organisms follow that pattern. Some non-native organisms cannot live in the new habitat into which they are introduced and so do not thrive and may even die. On the other hand, sometimes a change in conditions (environment change or change in the population(s) of other native organisms) can cause a native organism to grow or multiply out of control and take over a habitat.

<http://www.healthyeatingclub.org/info/articles/body-shape/weightmisconcept.htm>

There are some magical foods that cause weight loss - false

Some foods, such as grapefruit or **kelp**, are said to burn off body fat. This is not true. Dietary fibre comes closest to fulfilling this wish because it provides a feeling of 'fullness' with minimal kilojoules.

See Bigelow Laboratory's website for more misconceptions and misnomers:

<http://www.bigelow.org/hab/index.html>

For more misconceptions about algae see:

“Algae: False Claims and Hype”

<http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/algae.html>

Remember there is no such thing as an “ALGOLOGIST”, the correct term for a person who studies algae is “PHYCOLOGIST”