

One Green Ridge Road  
Pittsford, New York 14534  
October 30, 1979

Dear

At last July's Eagle Lake Property Owner's Association picnic, I agreed to continue to investigate the strange floating objects in the lake. To this end I have had the Water Quality people from Ray Brook investigating, as well as the Fisheries Department of ECON. They came up with nothing. Then I went to a friend of mine who is doing his Master's Thesis at Cornell, with the results enclosed.

I discussed the matter further with Frank Vertucci, after I received his letter, and he gave me some more information which I list below:

- 1) "Blue-green" algae are generally "good" algae. He says that this particular creature is very difficult to get rid of. It generally is an uncommon situation, and, without further study he cannot make any judgement why it would be in Eagle Lake.
- 2) It is very possible that it is in the lake due to a rise in the nutrient level, i.e., from phosphates used in washing machines or dishwashers, or from fertilizers used on lawns. (I assured him that the latter possibility was quite remote.)
- 3) When he says that trying to get rid of it would bring in less favorable algae, he is talking about chemical treatment of the lake. I asked him if he thought that a reduction in the amount of phosphates in the lake could cut back their development and he said "quite possibly".
- 4) Since writing his letter, he has found other articles about this algae which state that it can be toxic to the skin of some swimmers, giving them a type of "swimmer's itch". This allergy is not common, but it can occur.

An interesting side light on this critter is that it adjusts its own level in the water by the amount of nutrients it needs for life. It is hollow and retains gas in its core which makes it float. If there is too much sun, it exudes this gas and sinks, but when it needs more light, it retains the gas and rises. Therefore, after a rainstorm or in the morning, one finds many more on the surface than later in the day.

I have sent this information on to the present officers of the Association for their information and possible action, but I thought that I should let all the people who might use the Lake water for drinking and bathing know what the findings are.

I think that there is nothing to be concerned about, but I would strongly suggest that you use a ceramic filter on the lake side of your water intake valve, to prevent these algae from entering your water supply.

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If there are any further developments, I will keep you informed, but I do not expect any until next year.

Have a good winter.

Yours truly,

Robert C. Stevens

Enc.

