



natural lakes and prairie marshes; wet prairies and fens; bottomland forests

Iowa Status

common, native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

spirogyra

Spirogyra spp.

Kingdom: Protista
Division/Phylum: Chlorophyta

Features

Spirogyra is a filamentous green algae. It consists of single cells joined together in a colony to form strings or filaments. It is a common component of "pond scum" or "moss" found on still waters in the spring and summer. It is easy to identify using a microscope because it has spiral chloroplasts (green bodies of pigment).

Natural History

Like other filamentous green algae, Spirogyra lives in lakes, ponds, and wet places where it may be attached to rocks, plants, soil, or animals, or it may be free floating. Reproduction may be sexual (two cells fuse to form a zygote) or asexual (one cell divides into two). It may form "resting cells" when conditions are bad. Because it has the green pigment chlorophyll, Spirogyra can produce its own food by photosynthesis.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs;