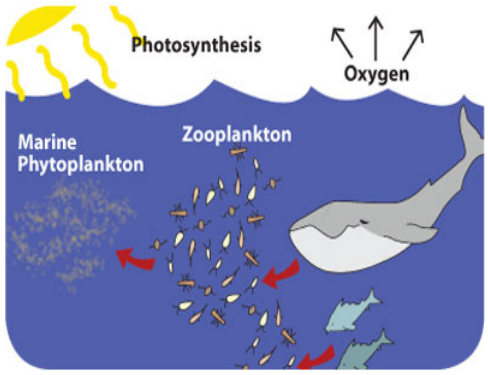
Meet the Algae

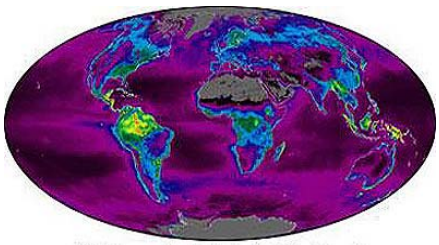
Biology of Algae

Where are they found?

Algae **live in water** and are found in aquatic environments all over the planet – from the open oceans, lakes, rivers and ponds, to thin films on rocks, and even on snow and on animal fur.



Microalgae – also called phytoplankton - provide the basis of the food chain in many habitats



Net Photosynthesis over the year (in Kg of CO_2 fixed/metre^2)

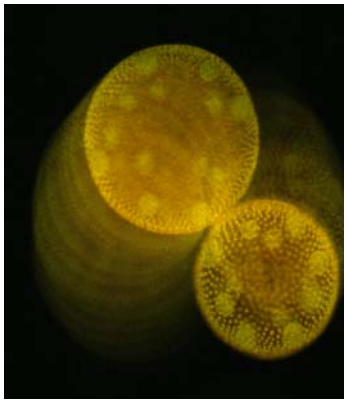
Because the oceans are so vast, taken together algae fix more CO_2 than the rainforests

Why are they important?

Algae live by **photosynthesis**, capturing light energy from the sun and fixing CO_2 from the atmosphere. They are responsible for **around 50% of all CO_2 fixation** - more than tropical rainforests. Algae are currently grown commercially to produce **pigments, vitamins and fish food**.

They are interesting too!

One of the most fascinating things about many microalgae is that they can **move**, using the beating of **flagella** to swim through the water.



Volvox cells – known as 'Dancing Algae'