

Protecting an Urban Oasis

Lake Temescal was originally built in 1868 as a water supply for the growing city of Oakland. Today, the lake is an oasis for recreation and an important home for wildlife.

In Lake Temescal, plants are the key source of food for the entire web of life. Small organisms, such as aquatic insects, feed on the plants before becoming food for the fish. The fish are then food for migrating birds, like osprey and cormorants, and even otters. A healthy lake is essential for a healthy ecosystem.

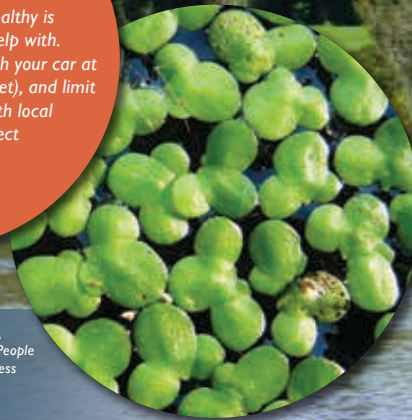


Cyanobacteria, also called blue-green algae, are a natural part of the ecosystem. Like plants, they use sunlight, carbon dioxide, and nutrients to grow. Under the right conditions they can bloom and release toxins. If the water becomes unsafe the lake will be closed to recreational use.



What You Can Do

Keeping Lake Temescal healthy is something everyone can help with. Avoid using fertilizers, wash your car at a car wash (not in the street), and limit water use. Get involved with local organizations to help protect Bay Area watersheds.



Floating plants, like this native duckweed, extract excess nutrients from the water. People often confuse duckweed and other harmless plants, like algae, with cyanobacteria.

