



Severn Sound Environmental Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jelly-like Blobs in Little Lake

MIDLAND, ON, September 6, 2019 – Each year, the Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA) team samples Little Lake in Midland for water quality every two weeks throughout the ice-free season. Around the beginning of August field staff came across numerous green jelly-like blobs in the nearshore areas and the open lake. Microscope analysis by SSEA Water Scientist Aisha Chiandet has determined that the blobs are colonies of a microscopic animal called *Ophrydium versatile*, which is a type of protozoan. “The colonies form a symbiotic relationship with algae, utilizing chlorophyll for energy production and giving them a green colour” says Chiandet. “They are a natural occurrence and not seen as problematic”.

Many types of algae, along with bacteria and small zooplankton, can live within the “blob”. Larger colonies become gas filled, and can float to the surface, particularly during windy conditions. They develop around plants or on hard surfaces. These colonies have also been observed in 2012 in Bass Lake and the North River. *Ophrydium* is not well studied, but it appears that colonies are fairly common to transparent temperate lakes.

At the Severn Sound Environmental Association, we are committed to ensuring exceptional environmental quality and exemplary stewardship of the Severn Sound area through sound science, collaboration and partnerships. For more information about the SSEA, visit us at www.severnsound.ca.

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Photos attached



Ophrydium colonies in the North River in 2012.



Ophrydium colony taken from Little Lake in August 2019.



Ophrydium individuals at 1000x magnification.