

Common Name: surf grass
Scientific Name: *Phyllospadix* spp.
(FYE-low-SPADE-ix)



<http://www.marine.gov/Research/CoreSurveys/Phyllospadix.htm>

Defining Characteristics

- Max length of 1 m, width of 3 mm
- Branched root hairs fasten the plant to rocks
- Green with yellowish base

Habitat & Range

- Low intertidal to shallow subtidal
- Exposed coastal shores among rocky sediments
- Can grow in tidepools that are deep enough to keep temperatures low
- Alaska to Mexico

Prey & Predators

- Food is produced on its own through photosynthesis
- Predators are birds, fish, sea urchins
- Special chemical compounds are produced to deter predators

Reproduction

- Asexually by rhizome growth
- Sexually by producing seeds

Additional Information

- Flowering plant, related to lilies
- Surf grass beds are important habitats for many marine organisms like fish, crabs, sea cucumbers, and nudibranchs

Common Name: eelgrass
Scientific Name: *Zostera marina*
(zos-TARE-a mare-EEN-a)



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Defining Characteristics

- Max length of 1 m
- Long, slender green blades
- Rhizomes are root-like structures that anchor the plants in sandy sediments

Habitat & Range

- Intertidal mud and sand substrates in protected waters
- Alaska to Mexico

Prey & Predators

- Food is produced its own through photosynthesis
- Predators are birds, fish, sea urchins

Reproduction

- Asexually by rhizome growth
- Sexually by producing seeds

Additional Information

- Flowering plant related to lilies
- Eelgrass is threatened by nutrient loading (eutrophication) and the construction of docks, which can block light and involves dredging, which tears up eelgrass beds
- Eelgrass beds provide spawning grounds for many marine species, particularly herring
- The network of rhizomes stabilizes sediments and provides habitat for many organisms like crabs, sea cucumbers, and nudibranchs