

Common Name: sea lettuce
Scientific Name: *Ulva lactuca*
(UL-vah lak-too-ka)



<http://www.crd.bc.ca/watersheds/protection/wildlife-plants/sealettuce.htm>

Defining Characteristics

- Max size of 18 cm long (can be broader than long)
- Thin, translucent, light to bright green blades
- Ruffled edges
- Short, distinct *stipe* (stem)

Habitat & Range

- Mid to low intertidal
- Restricted to tidepools in upper intertidal
- Rocks on protected shores, pilings, dock floats
- Alaska to southern California

Prey & Predators

- Food is produced on its own through photosynthesis
- Predators are geese, sea urchins, crustaceans, molluscs

Reproduction

- Releases male and female *gametes* (sex cells), which are fertilized to produce swimming spores

Additional Information

- If the water in a tidepool is green, sea lettuce has released its reproductive cells
- It is commonly eaten in salads, soups, dried, or raw
- Bioindicator because it absorbs nutrients directly from the water and is quite pollution tolerant so samples can be taken to measure water quality