

Heterosiphonia japonica

Asian red algae,
Heterosiphonia

Invasive to Maine

Coastal
Rocky Intertidal

Growth Pattern



Kathy Ann Miller, Shoals Marine Laboratory

PERMITTED USE

Look for a filamentous (hair-like) red algae. The bushy, feathery fronds may be up to 60 cm long. Look for thin filaments that have an irregular branching pattern. The diameter of each filament decreases toward the tips.

Thallus (Body)



Kathy Ann Miller, Shoals Marine Laboratory

PERMITTED USE

Using a microscope, look closely at the cell structure. Main branches are multiple cells thick. Side branches coming off of the main branch are one cell thick.

Color



VS user RedRiots, South Portland High School

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Look for a reddish-brown algae. When it is washed up on beaches, it often appears reddish pink.

GROWTH PATTERN	THALLUS CROSS SECTION
 DICHOTOMOUS GROWTH	 ROUND
 AXIAL GROWTH	 FLATTENED
	 FLATTENED WITH MIDRIB

Additional Information



VS user RedRiots, South Portland High School

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Heterosiphonia japonica is native to Japan. It was first found on the east coast of the U.S. in 2009 in Rhode Island. It was first found in Maine by divers in 2011.

Similar Species

Filamentous red algae species look a lot alike. You need a microscope to look at the cell structure. Under the microscope look for main branches that are multiple cells thick (polysiphonous) with side branches coming off that are one cell thick (monosiphonous).

Did You Know?

Heterosiphonia japonica typically grows at depths of 6-22m on protected and exposed (to wave action) shores. When it detaches and washes up on shore, it can form large, decaying mats that smell like rotten eggs.