

Fucus spiralis

Native to Maine

Spiral Wrack
Flat Wrack

Coastal
Rocky Intertidal

Growth Pattern



Look for an alga in the upper intertidal zone that is up to 30 cm long with dichotomous flat branching blades.

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

Thallus (Body)



The branches have a midrib running down the middle and may twist in a spiral. The alga is anchored by a skinny holdfast to rocks. The branches have smooth margins.

Color



Look for an olive green to brownish alga. Receptacles when present have a light green color and holdfasts are darker in color than the main branches.

Other Information



Spiral wrack is reproductive from June through October, when it will have receptacles on the tips of the branches with a ridge on the side. These are not air bladders.

Similar Species

Spiral wrack can be very easily confused with other *Fucus* species in Maine. Bladder wrack looks very similar but does not grow in the upper intertidal zone, often has paired air bladders. Spiral wrack has receptacles with a raised ridge, bladderwrack does not.

Did You Know?

In Europe, spiral wrack is harvested for use as an herbal supplement and for homeopathic uses. It has a high concentration of several compounds including phenol acid.