

# Fucus vesiculosus

Native to Maine

Bladder Wrack  
Rockweed

Coastal  
Rocky Intertidal

## Growth Pattern



VS user Notorious Knitting Narwols, Falmouth MS



Look for an alga in the mid-intertidal zone that grows dichotomously, meaning each branch divides into two over and over and over.

## Thallus (Body)



VS user D Swag n, Falmouth Middle School



Look for an alga that grows up to 1 m long. Most specimens will have paired air bladders (vesicles) in the middle of the branches. The flattish branches have a midrib.

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

## Color



VS user Rusty Dustys n, Falmouth MS



Look for an olive green-brown alga. Individuals can vary in color somewhat. Many are reddish brown near the hold-fast.

## Other Information



VS user 047 Falmouth Middle School



When the alga is reproductive in the spring and summer, it will have pointed, heart shaped receptacles on the tips of the branches that have "goose bumps" and no raised ridge.

## Similar Species

Bladder wrack can be easily confused with other *Fucus* species in Maine. Spiral wrack looks very similar but it grows in the upper intertidal, never has air bladders, and it has receptacles with a raised ridge. Bladder wrack is also longer than spiral wrack.

## Did You Know?

If bladder wrack grows in a calm place it will have many vesicles to help it stay upright when submerged in water. If it grows where there are big waves, it will have few or no vesicles.

