

Alga

Translations

German : NC

English : NC

Spanish : NC

French : Algue

Italian : NC

Portuguese : NC

Definition : Algae are microscopic vegetal organisms without stem nor leaves which can be seen outdoors and indoors, as powdery or viscous deposits (thickness : tenth of mm to several mm). Algae form green, red,brown, or black veil like zones and can be found mainly in situations where the substrate remains moistened for long periods of time. Depending on the environmental conditions and substrate type,algae may form solid layers or smooth films. On monuments, algae are constituted of unicellular to pluricellular clusters, and they never form macroorganisms.

Relationship with the substrate : Algae generally constitute superficial films. They may be found also deeper into the substrate (under scales, in cracks).

Synonym(s) : NA

Other orthograph : Plural form : algae.

Sub-type(s) : NA

Not to be confused with : Algae may be confused with epilithic lichen, with fungae and sometimes with soot or mineral deposits soiling the stone surface.
If algae are present, wetting and brushing the surface will turn it to green due to the presence of chlorophyll.

Other remarks : Several groups of algae may grow on and in stone depending on climate and stone type. Green algae (sometimes red, e.g. trentepohlia) diatoms (usually yellow to brown), and in rare cases red algae may occur. Cyanobacteria (formerly called blue-green algae) are very frequent stone dwellers and can cause black, bluish or even violet stains.
In some cases the stone serves as a source of nutrients.
However usually the stone surface is only a solid host for growth.

References : QUB

Alga



Green algae growing on a limestone buttress.



Red algae on a bas-relief sandstone sculpture.
France, Thouars, Eglise Saint-Médard, 1994. Dimension stones 30 cm thick. LRMH / G. Oriol



Green algae developing on a lime render on stone masonry.

Czech Republic, Nedvedic, South Moravia, Pernstejn Castle, 2004. National Heritage of the Czech Rep. / D
Michoïnova
Cambodia, Angkor, Chao Sey, 2003. LRMH / V. Vergès-Belmin