

# Elodia

- Kindergarten - Animals 2 by 2
- 3rd Grade - Structures of Life
- 4th Grade - Environments



**What to do when the plants arrive.** Open bag and rinse plants in dechlorinated or spring water. Keep elodea floating in bowl of dechlorinated water to avoid drying out until it's ready to use. *You can dechlorinate water by simply leaving tap water out overnight.*

**Background.** Plants occupy the base of the food pyramid in aquatic systems just as they do in terrestrial systems. Inconspicuous single-celled algae that turn your aquarium green capture the sun's energy and provide food for countless minute animals in the water. If you want to stimulate an algae bloom (population explosion), put a goldfish in an aquarium, place it where it will get direct sun several hours a day, and provide the fish with plenty of food. When you see the water turn green, it's a sign that your aquatic plants are growing beautifully.

The popular aquatic vascular plant that looks like a green feather boa is Elodea (or sometimes Anacharis). In nature it is usually rooted to the bottom of a stream or pond, but in your aquarium it can just float around. It is a good food source for amphipods, fish, and crayfish and will contribute to the oxygen in the water as it photosynthesizes. It also provides crannies where small animals can hide from predators.

**What to do with them when the investigations are completed.** Elodea can be placed in a permanent aquarium *returned to the district science coordinator for distribution to other schools.*

**Care for the environment.** Aquatic plants obtained from pet stores or biological supply houses should never be released into the wild. Properly dispose of plants to prevent them from escaping and spreading to the wild, damaging the environment, local organisms, and food webs. Only native aquatic plants that have been collected from a local pond or lake can be returned to that same location.