



## Teeming Life in the Strait of Georgia Canada

In August 2016, the waters off of British Columbia turned bright green. The Strait of Georgia and nearby inlets were teeming with coccolithophores—a harmless type of floating plant-like organisms called phytoplankton. Coccolithophores have chalky, scale-like shells made of calcium carbonate. The milky-white color of those shells can brighten and discolor otherwise blue waters when the plankton explode in such massive blooms.

While coccolithophore blooms occasionally occur off the west coast of Vancouver Island, few scientists could recall seeing a bloom like this in the strait. Research suggests that coccolithophore numbers have been increasing in recent decades even as the water has been growing more acidic.