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| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | Blepharisma Kingdom: Protista  Phylum: Ciliophora  Class: Heterotrichea  Order: Heterotrichida  Family: Blepharismidae  Genus: Blepharisma  Species: |  | |  | | | General Information:  Blepharisma is a one celled animal like protists. They are commonly found swimming around in the algae samples brought back to class. The specimens above were viewed at 400 magnification and photographed using a flex cam fixed to the ocular lens. The large buccal (mouth) cavity at the front end of the organism helps with it's identification. This protist is covered in minute hair like structures called cilia. The cilia are used to propel them through the water and assist them in collecting food. Blepharisma swims through the water spiraling like a drill. As it does so diatoms and bacteria are funneled into the buccal cavity. A small membrane bound pocket, known as a food vacuole, collects the organic matter and eventually breaks free and moves the nutrient material around inside the organism (notice the diatoms inside these specimens). The nucleus can be seen in both specimens shown above. In addition, the contractile vacuole, which pumps out excess water, is visible in the specimen on the left in the end opposite the buccal cavity. To view a movie clip that shows this specimen swimming [click here](http://docs.google.com/images/bleph.mov). | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | | --- | | Copyright © 2008 Amador Valley High. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part in any form or medium without express written permission of Amador Valley is prohibited. | |