

## Where do fish go when they die?



When their time comes, the fish simply sink to the bottom of the lake where they lay in peace. It is their cemetery. It is lucky for the cottagers because it would be rather unpleasant if their lakes were covered with dead fish.

But why do the fish sink to the bottom? They do so because they are heavier than water and they don't float. In order to float, they need a "life jacket" so to speak. Most fish are equipped with an air-bladder that enables them to control their floatability. The bottom feeders are the only ones without that bladder. When a fish dies, its air-bladder deflates and it then becomes heavier and sinks to the bottom.

Everything takes place under the water. The fish dies discreetly unless its air-bladder remains intact. If that happens, the fish will float to the surface of the lake and end up on the shore where it will decompose. However, this is unusual. That phenomenon is only seen when the mortality rate is exceptionally high due to low oxygen concentration during early spring, the period of winterkill, or the summer.