



Leaves & Lakes



Hello friends!

My name is Billie (they/them).
I live in Lake Mendota in Madison,
Wisconsin.

Today when I was swimming, I saw
the leaves changing at Picnic Point.



I have a WATER
WONDER to share.

Leaves can make lakes
sick!



Leaves are like
tea bags.



When placed in water, leaves change
water's color, taste, and smell
because leaves contain phosphorus.





Element P is very reactive. A little
can go a long way - that's why it
is used in matches!



Too much phosphorus harms fish
like me because it is algae food.





Blue-green algae (also known as Cyanobacteria)
makes the water stinky and unsafe for swimming!
So, what can you do to help?





Rake your leaves out of the street!





What to do with all those leaves? Start backyard composting so the leaves can go back into the Earth.





Or, you can use leaves as
garden mulch!





All of these actions keep water clean and safe for you and me! See you again soon as we work together to protect our lakes!



