



Term 1, Lesson 1

Wetland Habitats

Learning Objectives:

1. Define a wetland habitat;
2. Recognise the riparian zone and aquatic zone within a wetland habitat;
3. Identify aspects of the riparian zone which support the aquatic environment



Photo credit: Dr. James Van Dyke

What is a wetland?

Land that is covered temporarily or permanently by water.

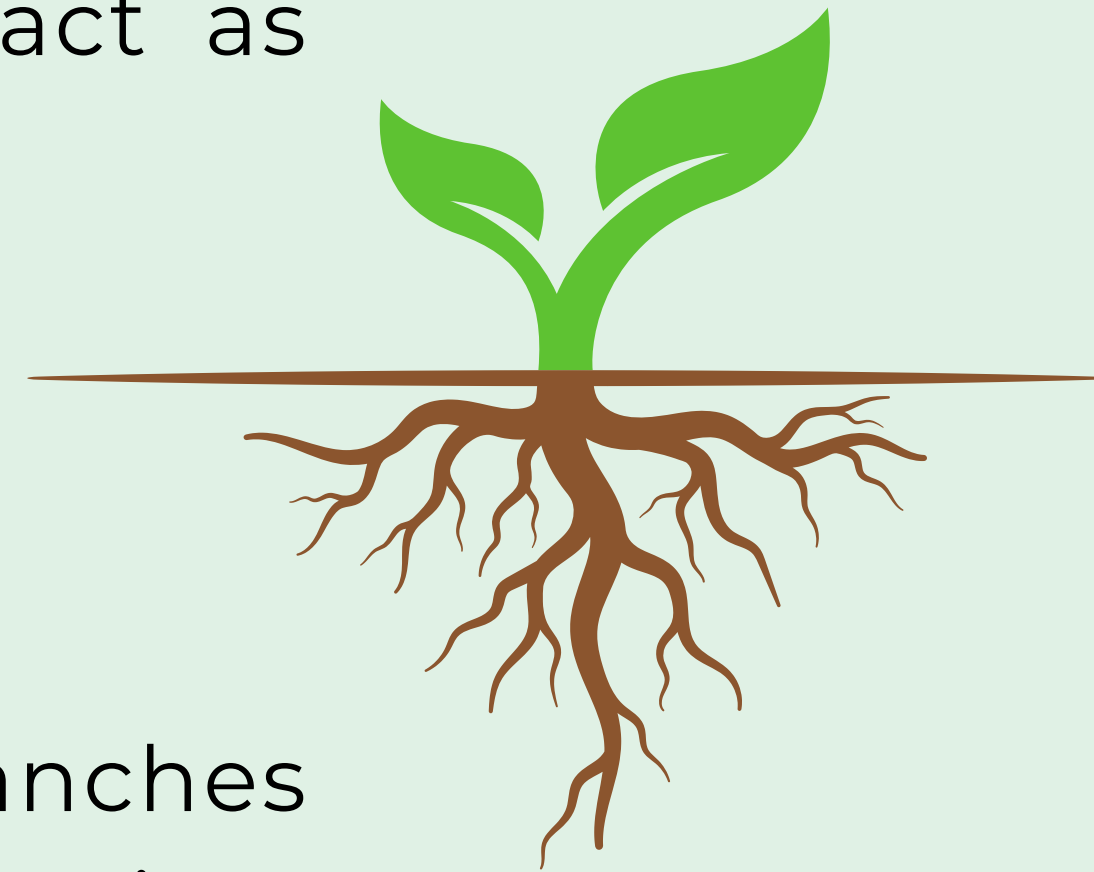
In a wetland environment there are two main habitats which are interconnected:

- The riparian habitat - the area of land along the banks of a river, stream, lake or wetland.
- The aquatic habitat - the waters (i.e. river, lake, pond) which support aquatic life.



Function of the riparian zone

- **Bank stability** - root systems of plants help bind the soil together and prevent erosion. They also act as filters, trapping pollutants and sediment.
- **Provides shade to the aquatic habitat** - helps regulate water temperature.
- **Nutrient cycling** - organic matter (leaves, branches etc) provides a source of nutrients for aquatic species.
- **Wildlife habitat** - wildlife corridors, nesting habitat for birds, shelter for aquatic organisms.



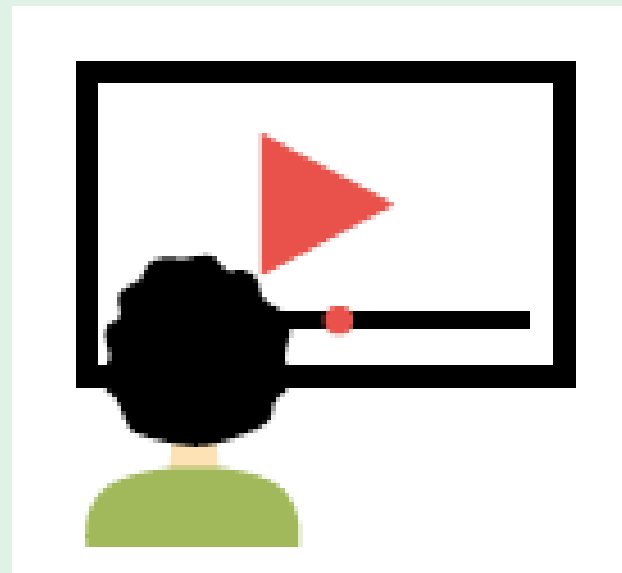
Classroom Activities

Activity 1 - Video: Wetlands

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9UbKIBc3W4>

Activity 2 - Video: Benefit of the riparian zone

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmeTuFQuF7k>



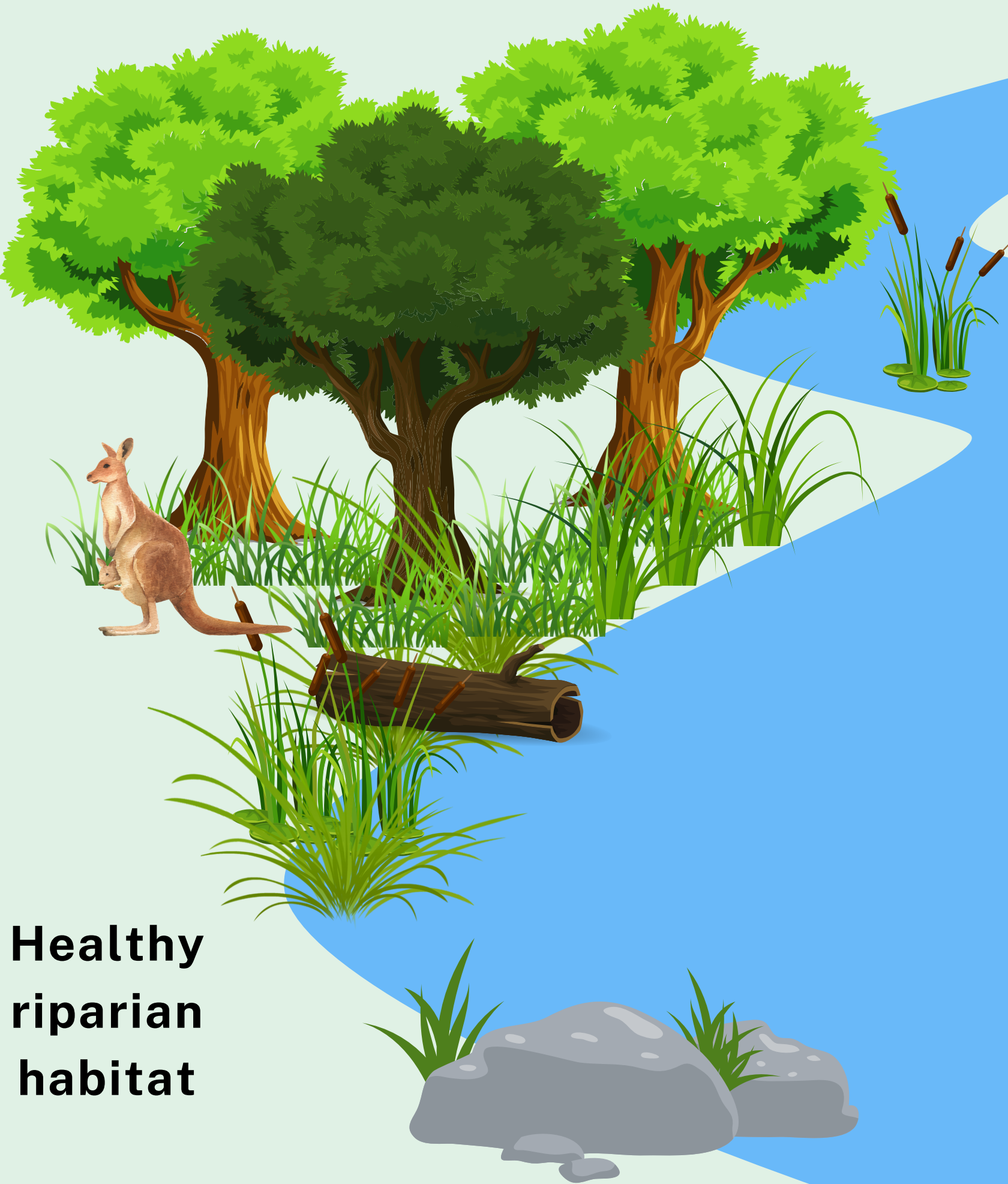
Classroom Activities

Activity 3 - Worksheet.

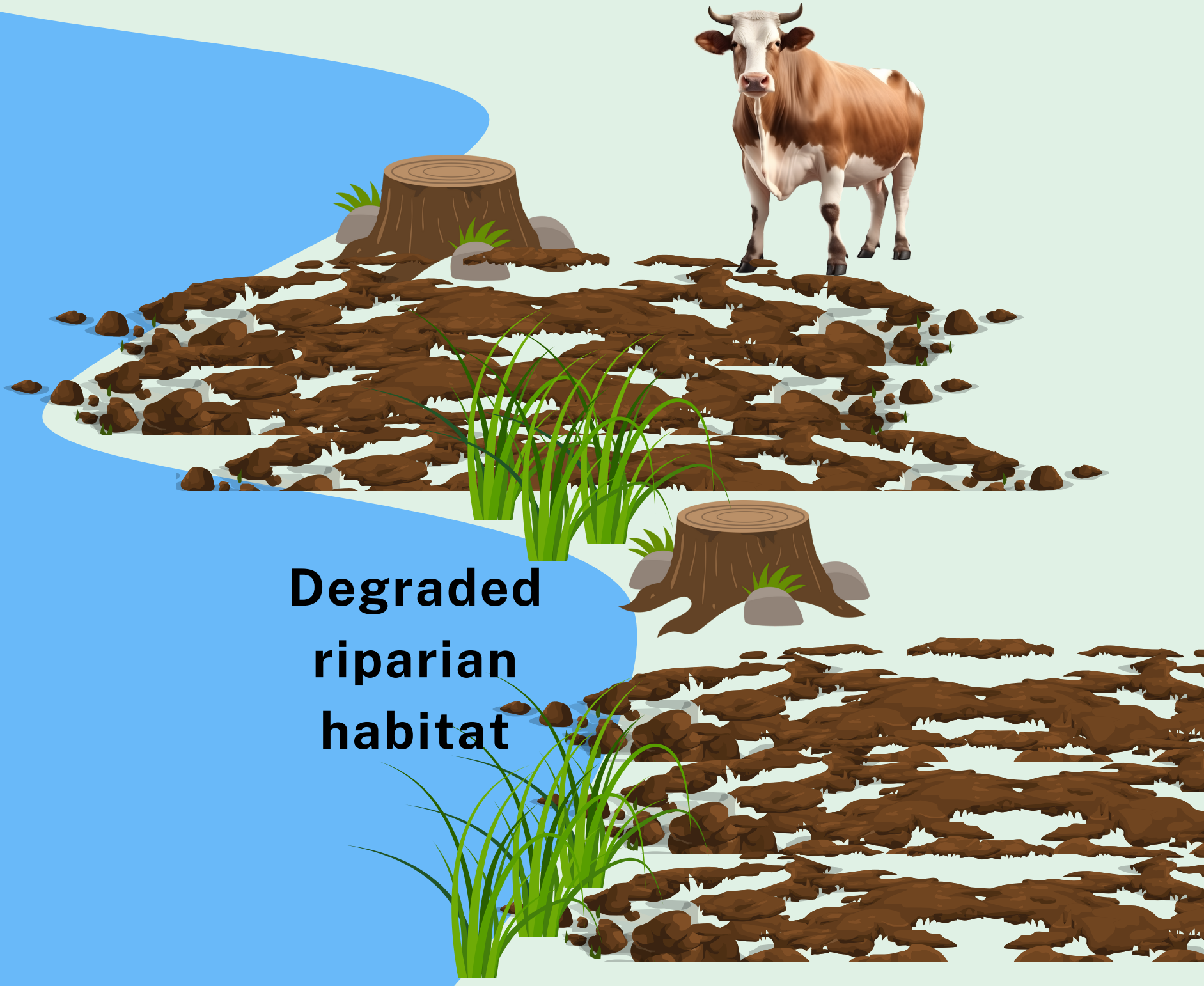
Draw a healthy riparian zone and degraded riparian zone.
Explain how the riparian zone supports the aquatic environment.



**Worksheet
sample answer**



**Healthy
riparian
habitat**



**Degraded
riparian
habitat**