

habitat: Environment where a plant or animal naturally grows and lives.

habit: an action or pattern of behavior that is repeated so often that it becomes typical of somebody, although he or she may be unaware of it.

Your own backyard, the playground at school, that strip of grass and trees in front of the mall... these are all habitats. EVERY living thing, including **YOU**, plays an important part in keeping their habitat healthy.

HABITATS SAMPLE

Trees & Plants Do Their Part!

A few examples:

- They remove carbon dioxide from the air;
- They release oxygen into the air;
- They provide food, shelter and a place to raise their young for animals, including **YOU**; and
- Plant native trees, shrubs, flowers, grasses or establish a rain garden.



Animals, Birds & Insects Do Their Part!

A few examples:

- Butterflies, bees, flies and beetles pollinate flowers;
- Bats and birds eat fruit and berries, defecate the seeds as waste, the seeds germinate in the soil so there is more fruit for other animals to eat, including **YOU**; and
- Earthworms eat dead plant material and their castings (worm waste) provide nutrients for the soil so more plants can grow.



Do You Do Your Part?

What habits do you have that affect your **habitats**? There are many things you can do to help keep your habitat healthy.

A few examples:

- Add a birdbath or other water source for animals;
- Plant flowers, trees with fruits or nuts and shrubs with berries;
- Recycle so that habitats don't have to be destroyed and natural resources are preserved;
- Let a corner or strip of your yard or playground grow naturally to provide shelter and food for wildlife; and
- Plant grass or groundcover on a bare patch of soil where erosion has occurred.



Habitat MAZE

Butterflies love flowers. They find nectar in flowers and that is their favorite food. They also carry pollen from plant to plant so that more flowers can grow. Help this butterfly find its way through the maze to the flower. **Watch out for the bird, the bee and the beetle because they're hungry too!**

To reach the flower the butterfly must travel on one continuous path and pass through **EVERY** patch of grass except the ones containing the bird, bee or beetle. The butterfly can only cross each patch one time. Get busy! The butterfly is hungry!



conservation **habits** = **HEALTHY HABITATS**

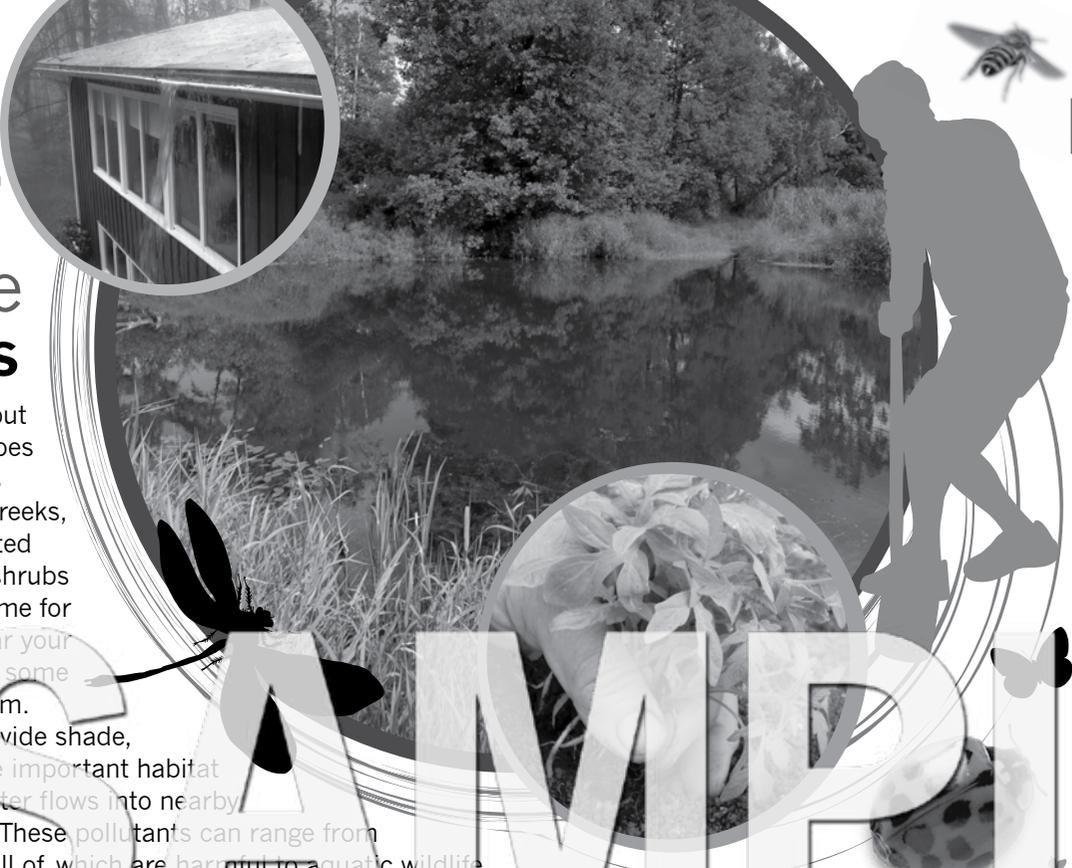
National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)
www.nacdnet.org

Getting "buff" On The Riverside – Riparian Buffers

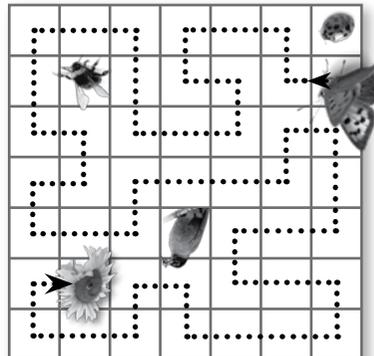
We all know what it means to be "buff" but how do we do it on the riverside and what does "riparian" mean? Riparian buffers are areas next to rivers, bays, lakes, streams, ponds, creeks, wetlands or floodplains that have been planted with a variety of grasses, plants, trees and shrubs to protect water resources and provide a home for wildlife. If there are any water resources near your home or in your community you should give some thought to "buffing up" the area around them.

Riparian buffers help stabilize banks, provide shade, protect the water from pollution and provide important habitat for wildlife. As rainwater or other surface water flows into nearby bodies of water it carries pollutants with it. These pollutants can range from motor oil to insecticides to litter and trash all of which are harmful to aquatic wildlife. Surface water can also flow too fast and carry soil with it leading to erosion. The soil eventually settles to the bottom of the creek, lake or river and clogs habitats. Heat is also a water pollutant! Have you ever seen steam rising from a hot parking lot after it rains? The rain water that runs off the parking lot carries heat with it and as it enters a nearby body of water it causes the water temperature to rise which can be fatal to plants and fish. Plant buffers filter rain and surface water removing pollutants, soil and slowing down the flow so that overheated water can cool down.

"Buff" up the water's edge in your neighborhood. Plant trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers in parallel bands along the water's edge. You will take pleasure in the beauty and local wildlife will benefit from better water quality and a safe habitat!



Habitat Maze Solution



Build Connections

Directions: There are 20 words related to "Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats" hidden in this grid. Start with any square and move to any connecting square, in any direction. Squares may be used more than once.

Where can I find more information?

What do I plant? It depends on what part of the country you live.

For Ecoregional Planting Guides
www.pollinator.org/guides.htm

For additional resources
www.nacdnet.org/education/resources/

- Build Connections Answers**
- country
 - ecosystem
 - life
 - home
 - ocean
 - survival
 - city
 - achieve
 - action
 - air
 - conservation
 - community
 - energy
 - existence
 - nature
 - native
 - preservation
 - resource
 - soil
 - water

How Do You Say Butterfly Answers

- If you live in anywhere and speak Sign Language, you would interlock your thumbs and flutter your fingers like wings.
- If you live in Greece and speak Greek, you would say petalou'da.
- If you live in the Netherlands and speak Dutch, you would say vlinder.
- If you live in Scotland and speak Gaelic, you would say dearbadan-de.
- If you live in Swaziland and speak Swahili, you would say luvivane.

How Do You Say Butterfly?

Try to match the word for "butterfly" with the country in the "If you live in" column and language in the "and speak" column.

vlinder	petalou'da
luvivane	interlock your thumbs and flutter your fingers like wings
dearbadan-de	

If you live in: and speak: you would say:

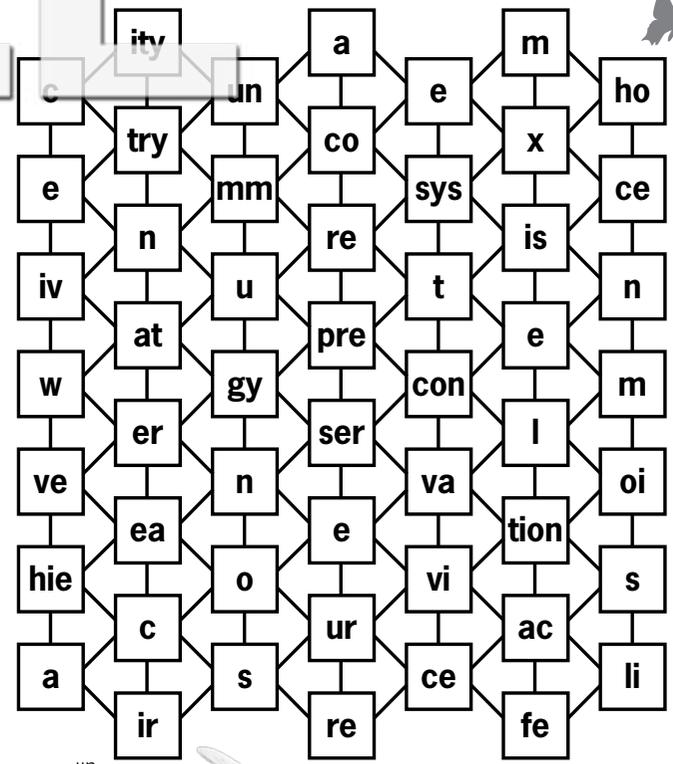
Anywhere • Sign Language _____

Greece • Greek _____

Netherlands • Dutch _____

Scotland • Gaelic _____

Swaziland • Swahili _____



Build Connections Answers

