

Write about what you have learned in a riparian habitat, add drawings too!

Riparian Habitat Naturalist



Be A Nature Detective



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Benton County

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/resources-1>

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What is a Riparian Habitat?

Riparian describes the zone where land meets water; such as the edges of rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds. In natural areas, the riparian zone supports large numbers of plant and wildlife species.

In the Willamette Valley the riparian zone describes the banks of the Willamette River and its lower tributaries. In this habitat you will find many broadleaf trees that have adapted to the seasonal flooding of the river. The banks of the Willamette River and its tributaries are lined with large black cottonwood, ash, and alder trees that thrive in this moist environment and shade the waters from scorching summer sun. The cool damp understory is made up of moisture loving berries and herbs. The abundance of water, shelter, and food make the riparian zone a rich habitat for wildlife and an excellent corridor for wildlife travel. This describes a habitat called riparian bottomland forest.

Watch for tracks in the soft mud, listen for the songs of migrating birds, and search for beaver chewed trees stumps. In winter look for nest silhouettes in the bare tree branches, stick mounds of the woodrat, and wildlife trails that lead to the waters edge.

Become an Riparian Habitat Naturalist

We challenge you to:

- care for natural areas and treat them with respect
- explore and learn more about the ecosystems and ecology in Benton County
- share with your family and friends the special places and the incredible things you have learned in nature

Name _____

I visited (place) _____

Date _____

Try your hand at nature writing!

Become an animal that lives in an riparian bottomland forest. Write a riddle/poem to tell us who you are.

Example: Beaver

Mammal

Thick, Fur

Swimming, Diving, Chewing

Dam, Builder

Flat-tail



Now you try:

Pick an animal: _____

- 1.) Write one word below that describes you
- 2.) Write two words below that describe what you look like
- 3.) Write three words below that describe how you move or where you live
- 4.) Write two words below about how you contribute to the ecosystem where you live:
- 5.) Write another word below that describes who you are:

1. _____

2. _____ , _____

3. _____ , _____ , _____

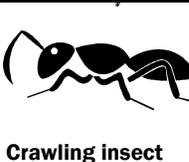
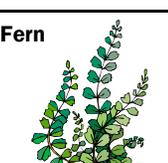
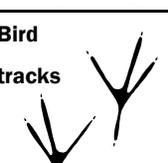
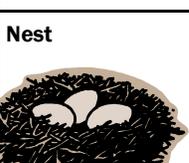
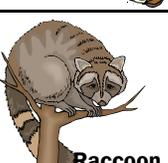
4. _____ , _____

5. _____

Try your riddle on a friend, can they guess who you are?

Go on a Riparian Scavenger Hunt

Use your detective skills to look for the items pictured below. Each picture is something interesting that you can find in a riparian habitat.

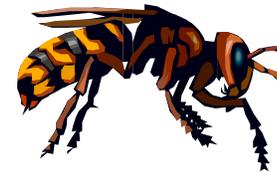
 Great Blue Heron	 Deciduous tree	 Frog	 Salmonberry
 Mushroom	 Mammal Tracks	 Wildflower	 Flying insect
 Robin	 Salamander	 Crawling insect	 Willow Flower
 Fern	 Bird tracks	 Nest	 Raccoon

Cross off the picture when you find the item. Can you find them all? Use not only your eyes but ears to help you.

Caring for nature, and taking care in nature!

Have Fun, Be Safe and Be Respectful!

- Be prepared with water, snack, rain gear, hat, or sunscreen when venturing into the outdoors.
- Stay with your group leader and on trails
- Take only photos, leave only footprints. Leave nature for others to enjoy too!



- Some things can harm you; be careful around stinging insects or stinging nettle plants. Learn to identify species before you go and respect their homes.

- Enjoy wildlife from a distance - to protect them and you!

Find a tree in the riparian zone!

Draw the leaf



Describe the leaf. What is the shape, color, and margin (edges) look like?



Evaluate a field site as suitable wildlife habitat

The abundance of water, shelter, and food make the riparian zone a rich habitat for wildlife and an excellent corridor for wildlife travel. Use this form to evaluate the site for your specific wildlife or insect species (from the Field Ecology card).

Use the field cards to finish the top part of this sheet

Name of your species: _____

What do you use for shelter, and raising their young? (examples: nest in tree, burrow in hollow log): _____

What do you eat? _____

Who eats you, and how do you protect yourself? _____

Now, evaluate your field site as appropriate for your species:

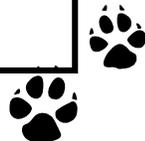
Do you find food sources to eat? List them: _____

Is there a suitable shelter to raise young? Describe it: _____

Do you see any evidence of predators? List the predator and the evidence: _____

List what shelter is around for your species to protect it from predators or inclement weather: _____

Do you think this is a good place for your species to live? Why or why not? _____



Become a Wildlife Detective

Many species of wildlife lives here. Look for tracks, scat, homes, or evidence of feeding. Can you think of any more evidence?

Wildlife Observations

Animal _____

Date _____ Time of day _____

Location _____

Behavior (what was the animal doing?)

Evidence of Wildlife

Clue _____

Where found _____

Draw or write about what it looks like

What animal do you think left this evidence?

