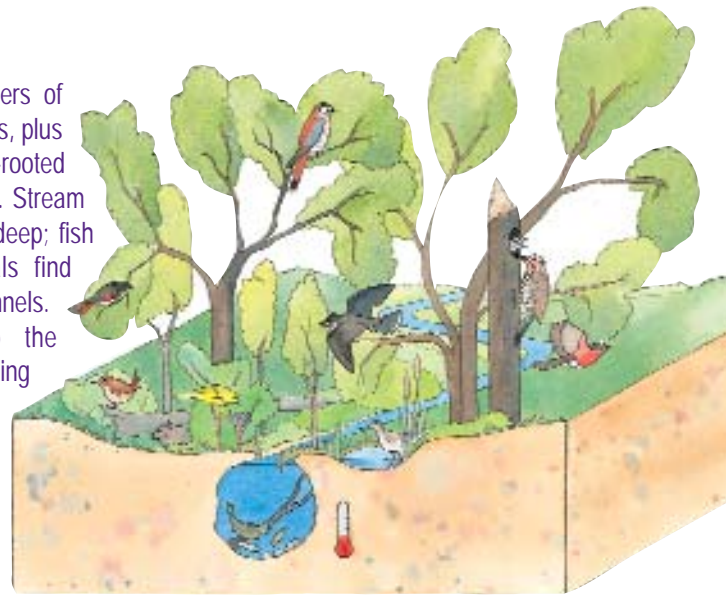


Well-managed Riparian Area:



The riparian area has layers of shrubs and trees, of all ages, plus a dense growth of deep-rooted grasses, forbs and sedges. Stream channels are narrow and deep; fish and other aquatic animals find many homes in these channels. Wildlife is attracted to the diversity of habitats for nesting and foraging. Livestock find abundant forage, water and shelter.



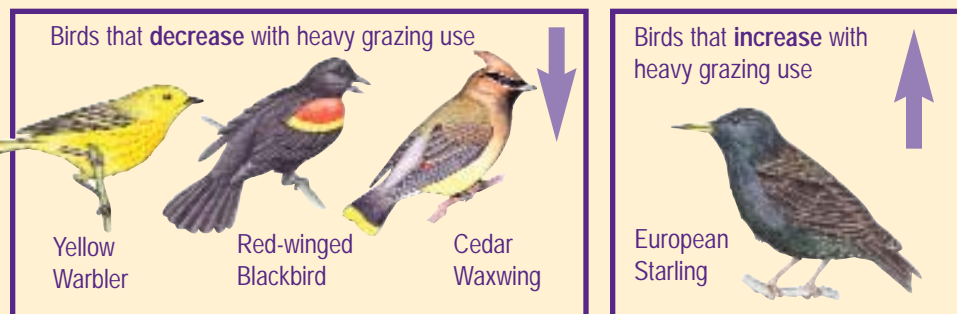
Poorly-managed Riparian Area:



Too much use of the streamside or lakeshore alters or eliminates vegetation, the glue of riparian areas. Stream channels become wider and shallower, the water warmer and species like trout disappear. When the remaining mature trees die, few, if any, younger ones replace them. The site becomes drier, resembling upland areas. Wildlife find fewer places to live, and forage and shelter for livestock declines.



Heavy grazing, over many years, can remove the lower layers of vegetation, especially younger trees and the shrub component, which form key habitat for birds and other wildlife. That's why native bird populations are 2 - 3 times higher in healthy riparian areas compared to heavily grazed riparian pastures. Careful grazing management provides shelter for wildlife and livestock.



Response of some bird species to heavy grazing (from a summary of six Alberta and Saskatchewan studies).