

# Common Plants and Animals of Manitoba's Riparian Areas

## Trees, Shrubs and Vines

Manitoba Maple  
Speckled Alder  
Saskatoon  
River Birch  
Swamp Birch  
Red-Oster Dogwood  
Round-Leaved Hawthorn  
Silverberry  
Green Ash  
Twining Honeysuckle  
Virginia Creeper  
Balsam Poplar  
Cottonwood  
Trembling Aspen  
American Plum  
Canada Plum  
Pin Cherry

Choke Cherry  
Wild Black Currant  
Prickly Rose  
Wild Red Raspberry  
Peach-leaved Willow  
Beaked Willow  
Sandbar Willow  
Willows  
Buffaloberry  
Canada Buffaloberry  
Meadowsweet  
Western Snowberry  
Basswood  
American Elm  
Highbush-cranberry  
Riverbank Grape

## Grasses and Grass-like Plants

Short-awned Foxtail  
Slough Grass  
Marsh Reed Grass  
Northern Reed Grass  
Narrow Reed Grass  
Tufted Hair Grass  
Alkali Grass  
Canada Wild Rye  
Tall Manna Grass  
Fowl Manna Grass  
Wild Barley  
Switch Grass  
Reed Canary Grass  
Common Reed  
Fowl Blue Grass  
Nuttall's Salt Meadow Grass  
Sprangletop

Alkalicord Grass  
Slough Grass  
Water Sedge  
Awned Sedge  
Bebb's Sedge  
Lakeshore Sedge  
Woolly Grass  
Beaked Sedge  
Sedges  
Creeping Spike-rush  
Tallcotton Grass  
Baltic Rush  
Hard-stemmed Bullrush  
Chair-makers  
Rush  
Seaside Arrow Grass  
Common Cattail

## Forbes (Wildflowers)

Sweet Flag  
Common Water Plantain  
Canada's Anemone  
Swamp Milkweed  
Willow Aster  
Small Blue Aster  
Beggarticks  
Water Arum  
Marsh Marigold  
Water Hemlock  
Willowherb  
Horsetail  
Smooth Wild Strawberry  
Sweet Scented Bedstraw  
Sea-milkwort  
Wild Licorice  
Curly-cup Gumweed  
Cow-parsnip  
Common Hop  
Marsh Vetchling  
Western Water-horehound  
Fringed Loosestrife  
Star-flowered Solomon's-seal  
Osterich Fern

Wild Mint  
Yellow Wood Sorrel  
Grass-of-Parnassus  
Arrow-leaved Colt's-foot  
False Dragonhead  
Saline Plantain  
Water Smartweed  
Silverweed  
Seaside Buttercup  
Buttercups  
Poison Ivy  
Western Dock  
Arum-leaved Arrowhead  
Red Samphire  
Water-parsnip  
Carrion Flower  
Goldenrod  
Woundwort  
Tall Meadow-rue  
Stinging Nettle  
Bog Violet  
Downey Yellow Violet  
Cocklebur  
Heart-leaved Alexanders

## Birds

Wood Duck  
Gadwall  
American Wigeon  
Mallard  
Blue-winged Teal  
Northern Shoveler  
Northern Pintail  
Green-winged Teal  
Canvasback  
Redhead  
Ring-necked Duck  
Lesser Scaup  
Bufflehead  
Common Goldeneye  
Hooded Merganser  
Common Merganser  
Ruddy Duck  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Horned Grebe  
Red-necked Grebe  
Eared Grebe  
Western Grebe  
American White Pelican  
Double-crested Cormorant  
American Bittern  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Cattle Egret  
White-faced Ibis  
Black-crowned Night-Heron  
Osprey

## Mammals

Woodchuck  
Beaver  
Franklin's Ground Squirrel  
Ermine  
White-tailed Deer  
Striped Skunk  
Gray Squirrel  
Least Chipmunk  
Red-backed Vole  
Meadow Vole  
Woodland Jumping Mouse  
Coyote  
Water Shrew  
Northern Pocket Gopher  
Porcupine  
Snowshoe Hare

## Amphibians and Reptiles

Tiger Salamander  
Gray Tree Frog  
Wood Frog  
Boreal Chorus Frog  
Canadian Toad  
Leopard Frog  
Western Painted Turtle  
Smooth Green Snake  
Plains Garter Snake  
Snapping Turtle  
Northern Red-bellied Snake  
Red-seeded Garter Snake

Bald Eagle  
Northern Harrier  
Yellow Rail  
Virginia Rail  
Sora  
Solitary Sandpiper  
Wilson's Snipe  
Bonaparte's Gull  
Black Tern  
Short-eared Owl  
Belted Kingfisher  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Alder Flycatcher  
Eastern Phoebe  
Yellow-throated Vireo  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow  
Sedge Wren  
Marsh Wren  
American Pipit  
Common Yellowthroat  
Yellow Warbler  
LeConte's Sparrow  
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Yellow-headed Blackbird  
Rusty Blackbird  
Baltimore Oriole

Muskrat  
Fox Squirrel  
Long-tailed Weasel  
Mink  
Cottontail Rabbit  
Red Squirrel  
Eastern Chipmunk  
Deer Mouse  
Northern Flying Squirrel  
Meadow Jumping Mouse  
Red Fox  
Masked Shrew  
Short-tailed Shrew  
Arctic Shrew  
Raccoon  
Moose

# Potential Impacts of Grazing on Biodiversity

## Vegetation

Over-use of the riparian area by livestock can result in the reduction of desirable vegetation, favouring non-native species such as Kentucky blue grass and sow thistle. Reducing productivity and diversity of vegetation is detrimental to the entire ecosystem. Non-native species commonly found in Manitoba's riparian areas include:

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Quack grass         | Yellow sweet clover |
| Burdock             | Common timothy      |
| Smooth brome        | Common plantain     |
| Ox-eye daisy        | Kentucky blue grass |
| Canada thistle      | Curled dock         |
| Leafy spurge        | Sow thistle         |
| Purple loosestrife  | Common tansy        |
| Scentless chamomile | Common dandelion    |
| Black medic         | White clover        |
| White sweet clover  | Tufted vetch        |

## Fish and Aquatic Habitat

Changes to riparian areas can also adversely affect fish habitat. In contaminated waters aquatic species can become vulnerable to parasites, viruses, bacteria and ammonia. Excessive phosphorous and nitrogen can stimulate algae blooms, which consume oxygen as they decompose. Resident fish may suffocate for lack of oxygen.

The loss of streambank vegetation reduces shading of the stream. Increased water temperatures can induce stress in aquatic life, promote disease, reduce spawning and reproductive success, slow growth and stop migrations.

Suspended sediment from streambank erosion, or from disturbance of the streambed itself, blocks sunlight and reduces growth of microscopic plants and animals. Gravel spawning beds may be destroyed by deposition of fine sediment.

# Grazing Strategies to Improve Biodiversity

## Maintain Adequate Vegetation

Because different birds and animals have different habitat requirements, managing riparian areas for them involves maintaining a healthy and diverse cover of vegetation.

This includes following recommended stocking rates and leaving sufficient carry-over of vegetation to provide cover for insects, birds, rodents and other small animals. For wildlife habitat, recommended buffer widths are 10 to 300 metres (32 to 980 feet), with 50+ metres (164 feet) recommended for nesting waterfowl. In general, a wider buffer zone will support more diversity.

## Avoid Grazing During Critical Periods

Avoid grazing during critical periods such as early spring and late fall, and provide rest for the riparian areas. Grazing should also be avoided when fish are spawning. Grazing can be deferred to allow waterfowl and ground-nesting birds a chance to hatch and rear their young without disturbance. Grazing too late in the season can harm young trees and shrubs, as well as reduce production for the following year.

## Manage Livestock Access to Waterways

Direct access to the waterways should be limited. Livestock can be drawn away from the riparian area by locating natural congregation areas e.g. water source and salt at least 15 metres (50 feet) away.

