

Nichols Natural Area Site Visit Worksheet

1. What watershed is this riparian zone located in?

2. Find a tree in the riparian area, sketch a picture of one of its leaves below, and use a dichotomous key and/or field guide to correctly identify it.
Common Name:
Scientific Name:
Leaf Drawing:

3. Examine the leaf litter and soil for a decomposer. Sketch it below and try to identify it.
Decomposer Name:
Decomposer Drawing:

4. Find and list any wildlife or signs of wildlife activity? (e.g. ducks, song birds, osprey, eagle, otter, heron, frog, bird droppings, bird roosts, feathers, beaver chewing, fish, animal tracks)

5. Identify three objects in the riparian zone that slow the flow of runoff.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

6. Draw and label a picture of something natural in the riparian zone that is helping to stabilize the riverbanks (keep them from being eroded).

7. Draw and label a picture of something artificial (placed by humans) that may be present here or has been used in other areas to stabilize riverbanks.

8. Identify an organism that prefers to live in the ecotone edge between the river and the upland.

9. Identify a link between the riparian zone and the base of the aquatic food web.
10. Identify and describe a terrestrial producer in the riparian zone.
11. Identify and describe an aquatic producer in the river.
12. Describe how the land use beyond the riparian zone would affect the river if all the riparian area trees and vegetation were cleared.
13. Identify three characteristics of the Nichols Natural Area that make it a healthy, effective riparian area.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
14. Name three things that you could do to make the Nichols Natural Area even healthier and more effective as a riparian zone.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____