

# The Worth of Wetlands

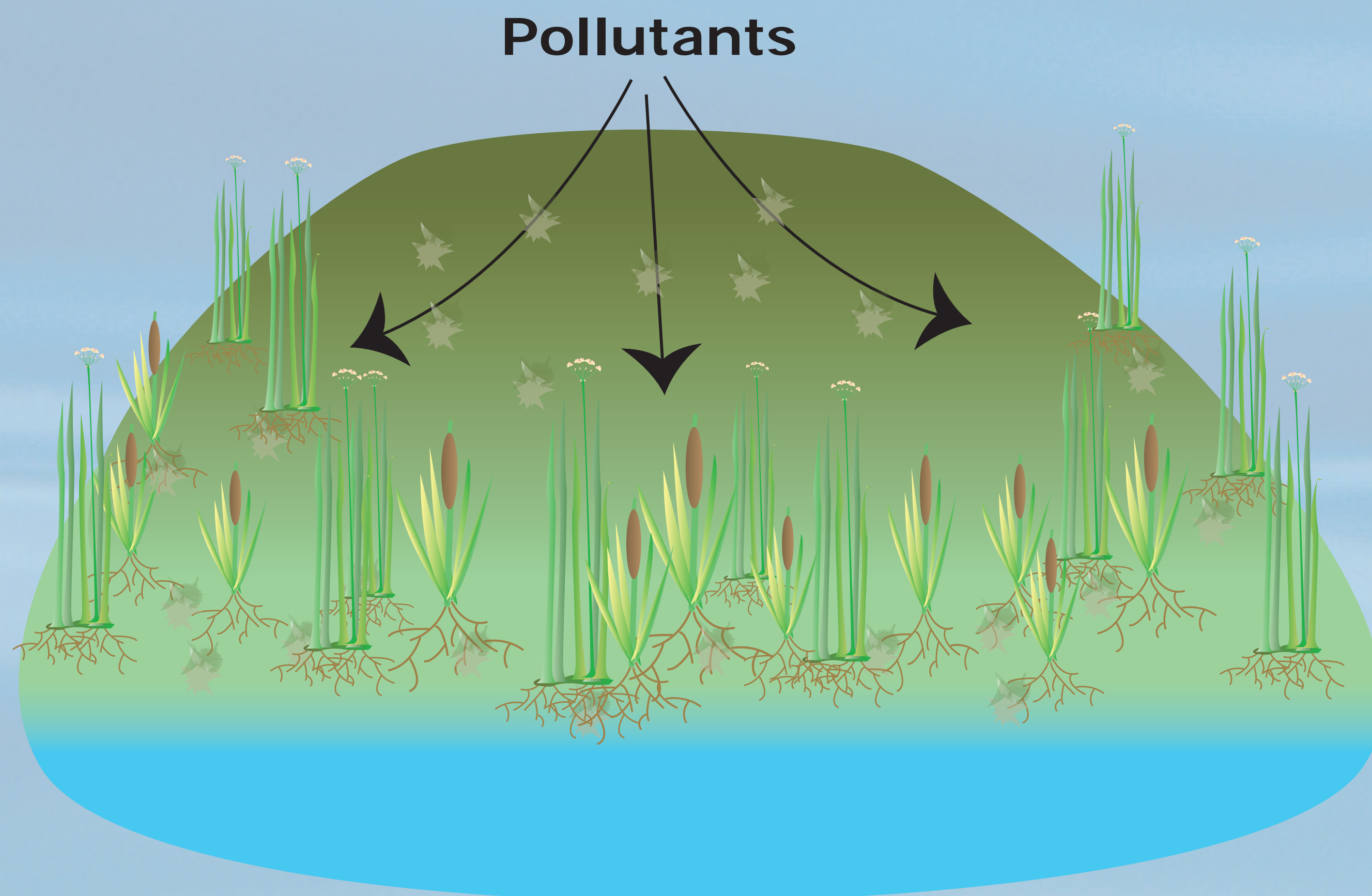
Wetlands improve the quality of habitat and water

Dominguez Gap Wetlands Project  
Los Angeles River



In addition to recharging groundwater, the East and West Basins provide wetlands habitat for wildlife, some threatened with extinction. Open water, marsh, and riparian woodlands offer rest stops, nest space, and forage for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds, small mammals, pond turtles, fish, and butterflies. With over 90% of California's wetlands lost to development, the Dominguez Gap wetlands provides critical habitat.

Wetlands, however, create more than habitat for wildlife. The sediments and pollutants carried in runoff settle out in the roots of cattails and sedges, allowing for cleaner water. Wetland plants also absorb nitrogen and phosphorous that, in large amounts, can cause excessive algae growth as well as create potentially toxic conditions for aquatic life.



Wetland plants absorb excess nutrients as well as pollutants



Varying water depths create different habitats