

Rio Bravo Information Cards

Cottonwood Seedlings – “baby” cottonwoods

(*Populus deltoides* ssp. *wislizenii*)

Small cottonwood trees which have just started growing. Generally, seedlings are less than 1” (2.5 cm) in diameter at 4.5’ (1.35 m) from ground level. Habitat needs:

- bare, wet soil to germinate
- open areas where there is a lot of sunlight
- roots must stay in water as the water table drops throughout the summer
- grows near water, on sand bars, near river’s edge



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Cottonwood Sapling– “teenage” cottonwoods

(*Populus deltoides* ssp. *wislizenii*)

Small cottonwood trees. Larger than 1 in. (2.5 cm) in diameter and less than 4 in. (10 cm) in diameter at 4.5 ft (1.35 m) above the ground level. Habitat needs:

- roots must reach to water as the water drops throughout the summer
- in former high water area—not far from riverbank
- not along the edge of river



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Big Cottonwood– “mature” cottonwoods

(*Populus deltoides* ssp. *wislizenii*)

Mature Rio Grande cottonwood trees can be up to 80 ft (24 m) tall and 4 ft (1.2 m) in diameter. Habitat needs:

- usually not near current river channel (trees survived because the river changed location after the trees were established)
- in the flood plain, not on valley slopes
- roots must reach to permanent water table



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Cattails (*Typha* sp.)

These wetland plants represent marshes and are important areas for wildlife nesting, protection and food. Habitat needs:

- there must be water at the surface for most if not all of the year
- often at an oxbow—an old channel of the river
- occasionally on the edges of sand bars or the inside curve of meanders



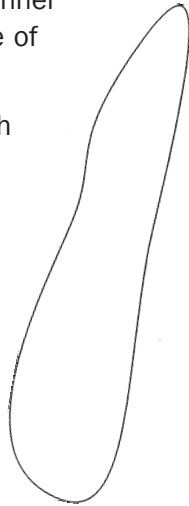
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Sand bar

Sand bars form in areas of the river where the water slows. Sediments, such as sand, drop out of the slowly moving river. Place:

- in the river channel or along the edge of the river
- lengthwise, with the flow of water



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Upland Shrubs

Upland shrubs grow in dry places where the water table does not come near the surface. Habitat needs:

- live in higher areas
- depend on rain for moisture
- can live on very little water each year

Examples: fourwing saltbush, fringed sage, broom dalea/false indigo



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Native Riparian Shrubs

Native shrubs have lived here for thousands of years. Habitat needs:

- in the flood plain of the river—the lowland alongside the river
- in the shade under old/mature cottonwoods
- sand bars

Examples: New Mexico privet/New Mexico olive, silverleaf buffaloberry, coyote willow



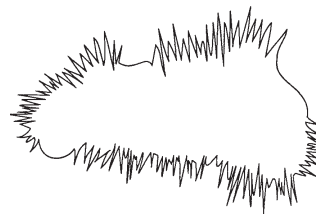
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Grassy Meadow

Grasses are one of the largest families of plants, providing seeds, leaves, and roots as food for many rodents, insects, and birds; and shelter for birds, insects, and rodents

- Different species grow in many environments from dry uplands to wet marshes, in full sunlight or in forest shade

Examples: saltgrass, blue grama



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