


# Migration Station at the Rio Bosque





Hey Ernie  
what are you  
doing?

I'm researching the  
Rio Bosque to find  
out which birds are  
at the park before  
we head out there  
on our field trip.





You must really love birds to want to research that type of information.



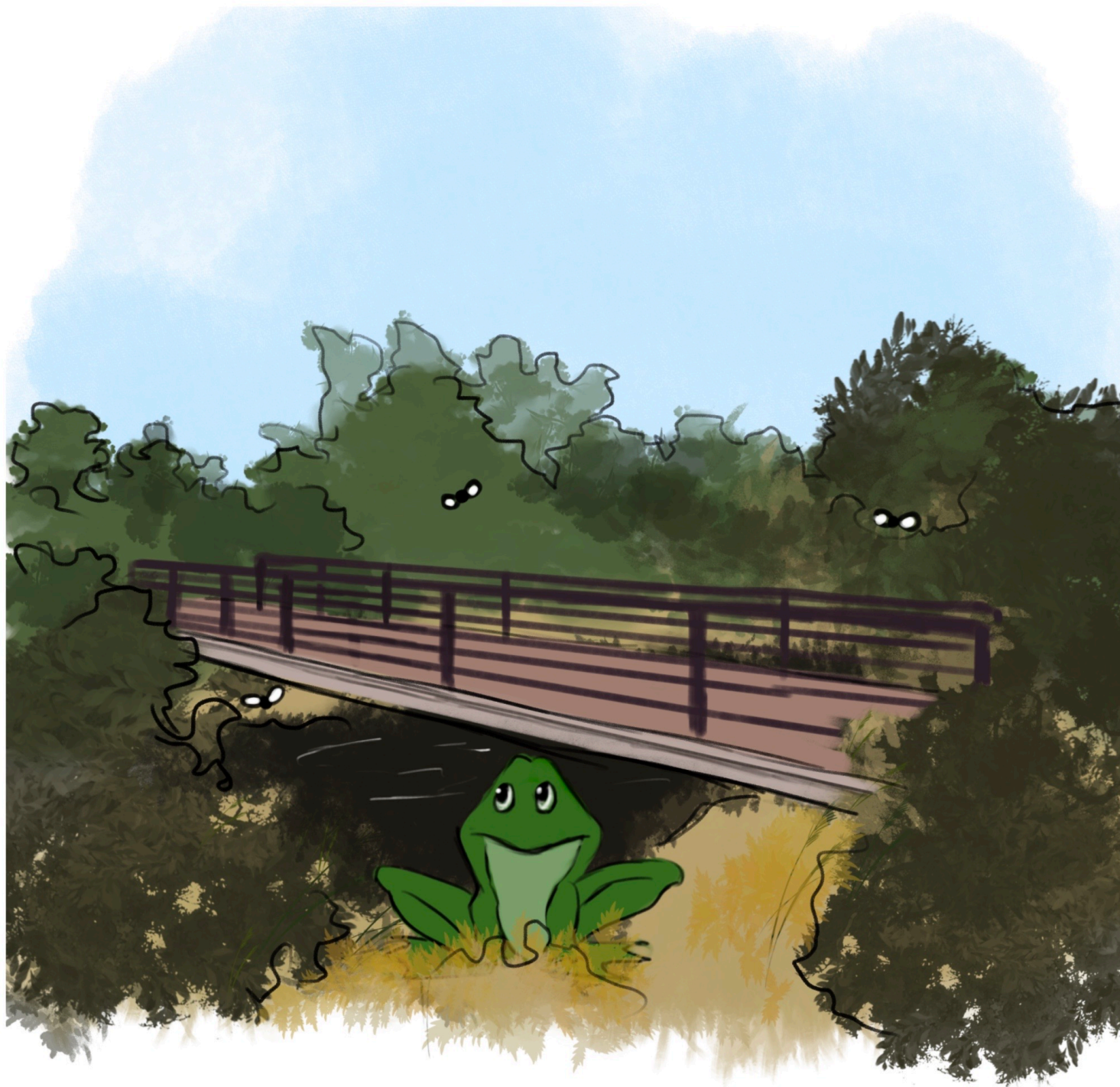
I watch birds for a hobby Carmen, but actually keeping track of the birds at the park tells us a lot of information about the ecosystems there and how they have a pattern of change.





How can a park change? Isn't it the same throughout the school year? Same trees, same bushes, same trails, same water, same animals? Last year when we went to the Rio Bosque in April, the park had lots of life along the waterways. It was beautiful.



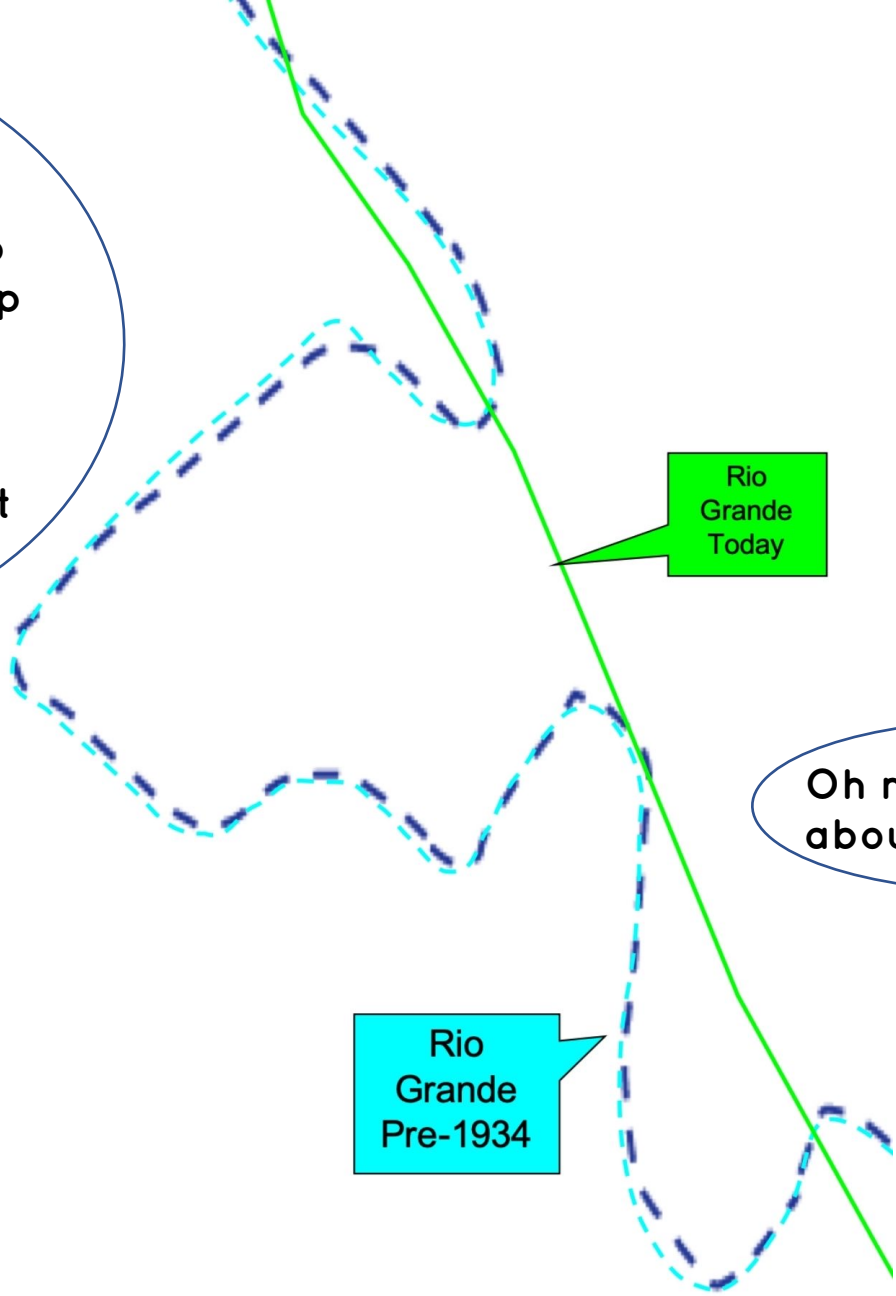


Yes it was Carmen. Life at a river environment can seem like an oasis in our desert, but it wasn't always like this, Carmen. This park is actually a re-creation of an environment that had disappeared.





Remember when you told me about how our river meandered and we had to cement it in in order to stop it from meandering? Well when we created the channel, all of the life that lived along the river in that area disappeared.



Rio Grande Today

Rio Grande Pre-1934

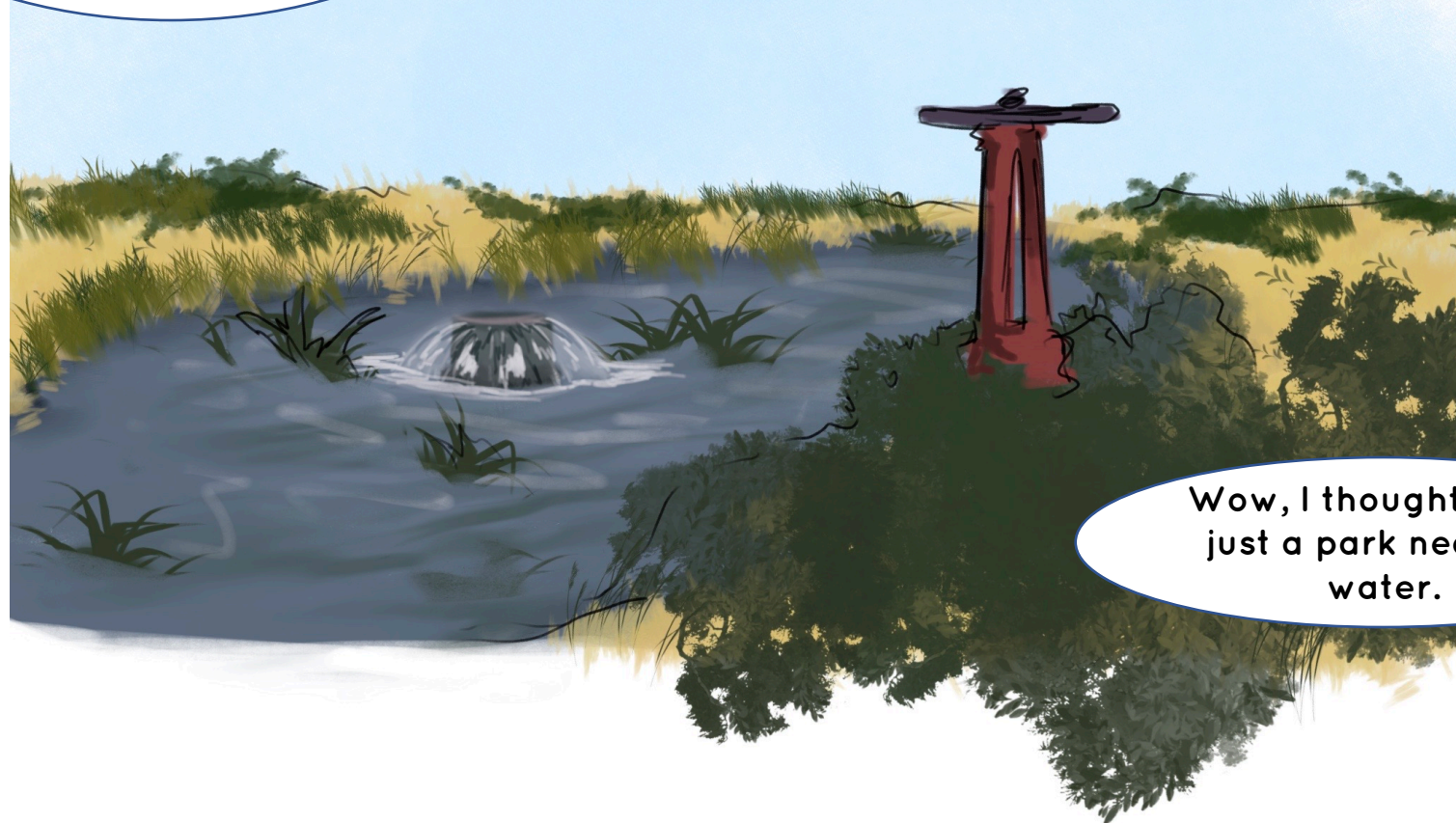
Oh no! I didn't think about that...



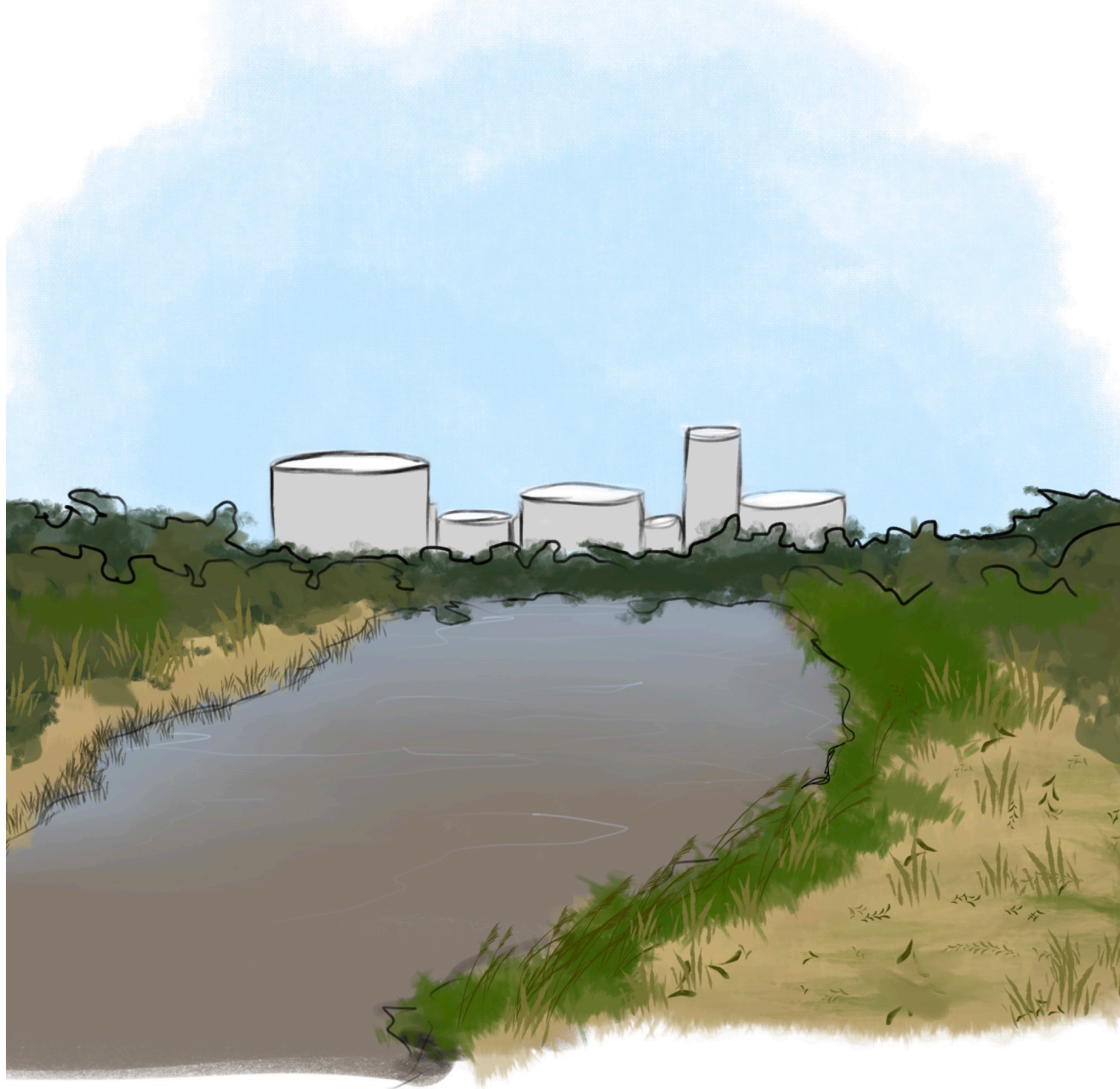




Fortunately, we had people in El Paso who did think about it and decided to try to create an area where life along the river could be brought back. That is the reason the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park was created.



Wow, I thought it was just a park near the water.



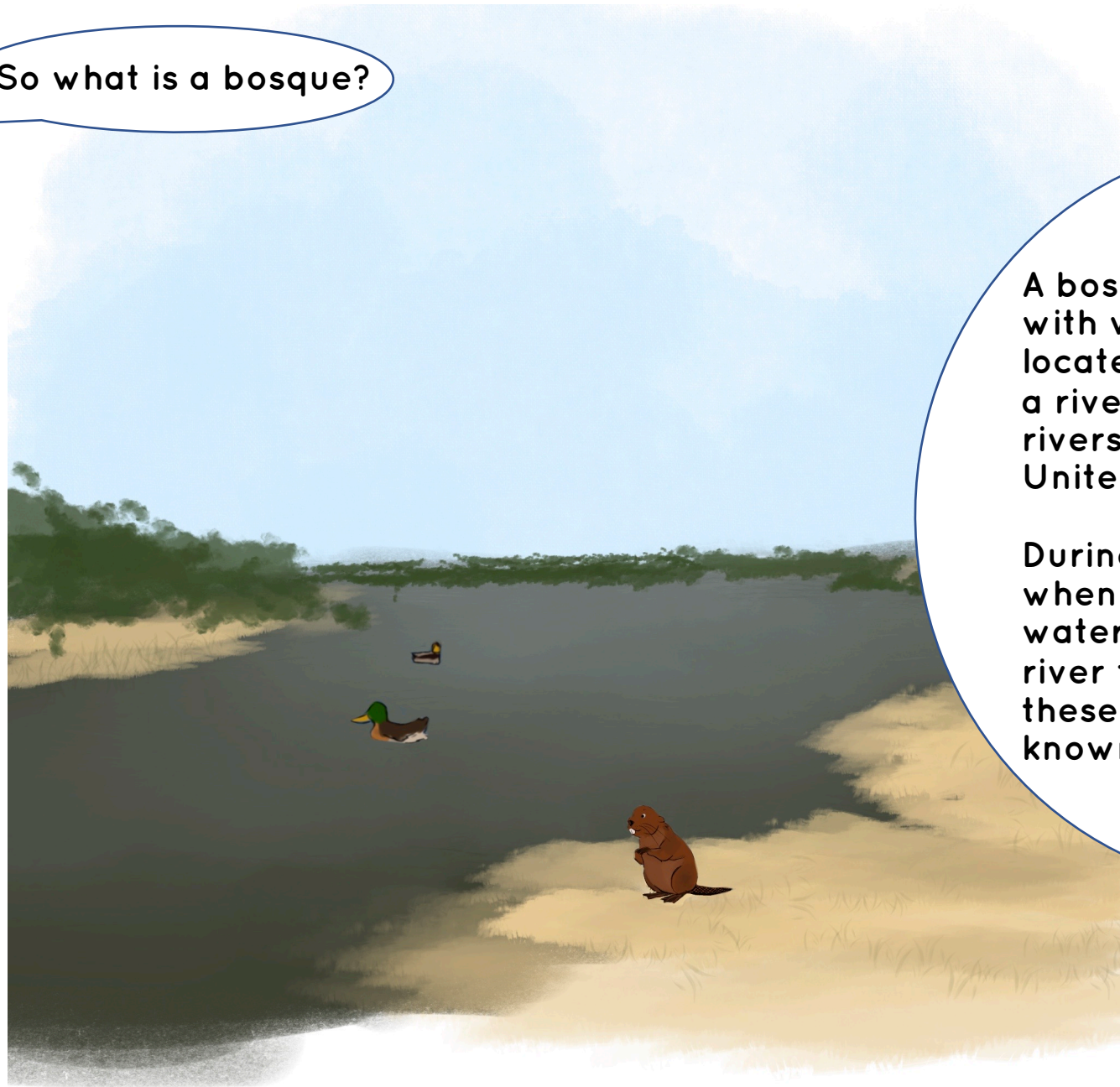
Three water sources provide the critical water for the wetlands to thrive: river water, groundwater, and reclaimed water, which comes from the nearby Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant.







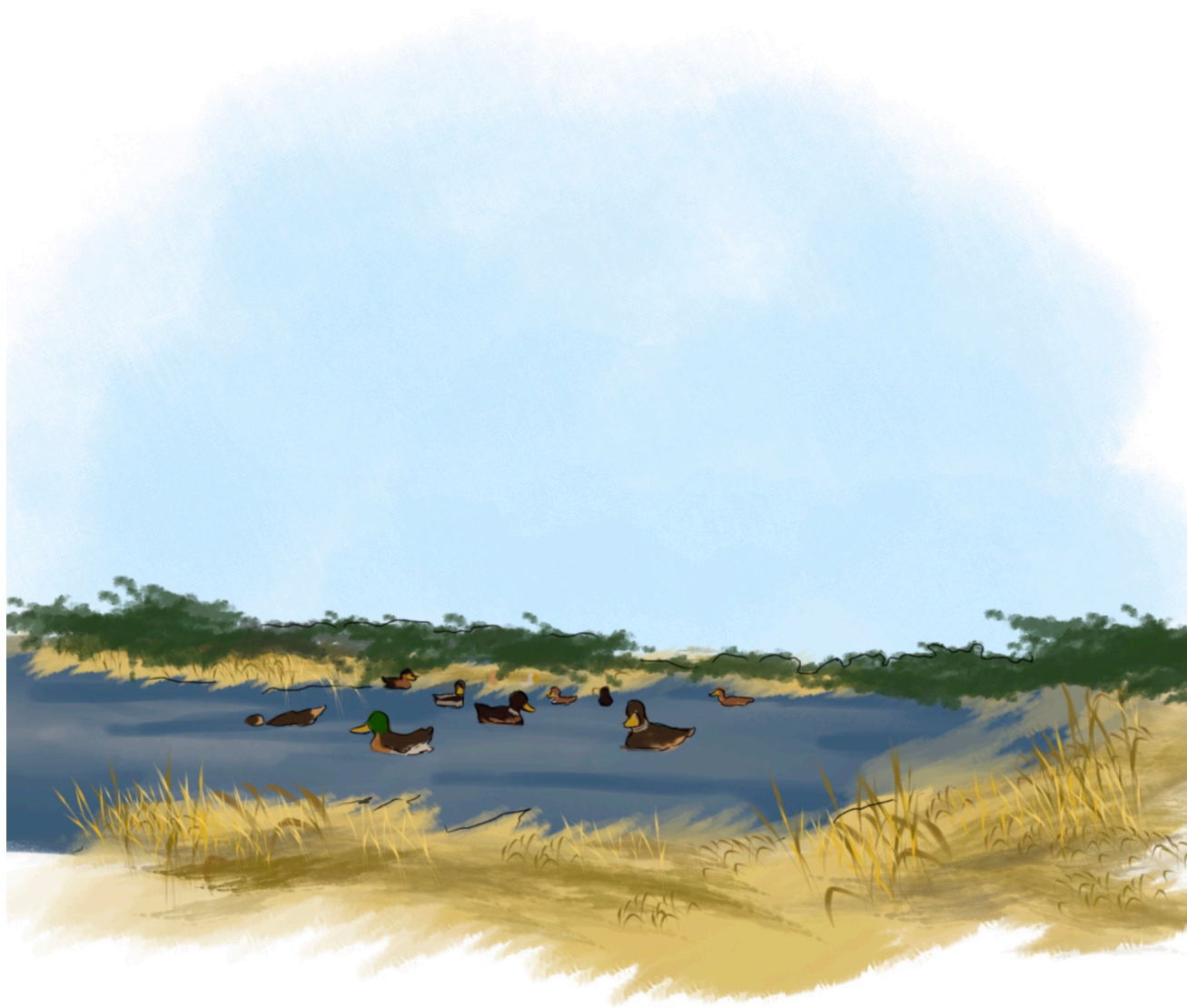
So what is a bosque?



A bosque is an environment with vegetation and trees located in the floodplain of a river. They are found near rivers in the Southwestern United States.

During certain seasons when a river receives more water than it can move, the river floods and creates these bosque habitats also known as riparian wetlands.

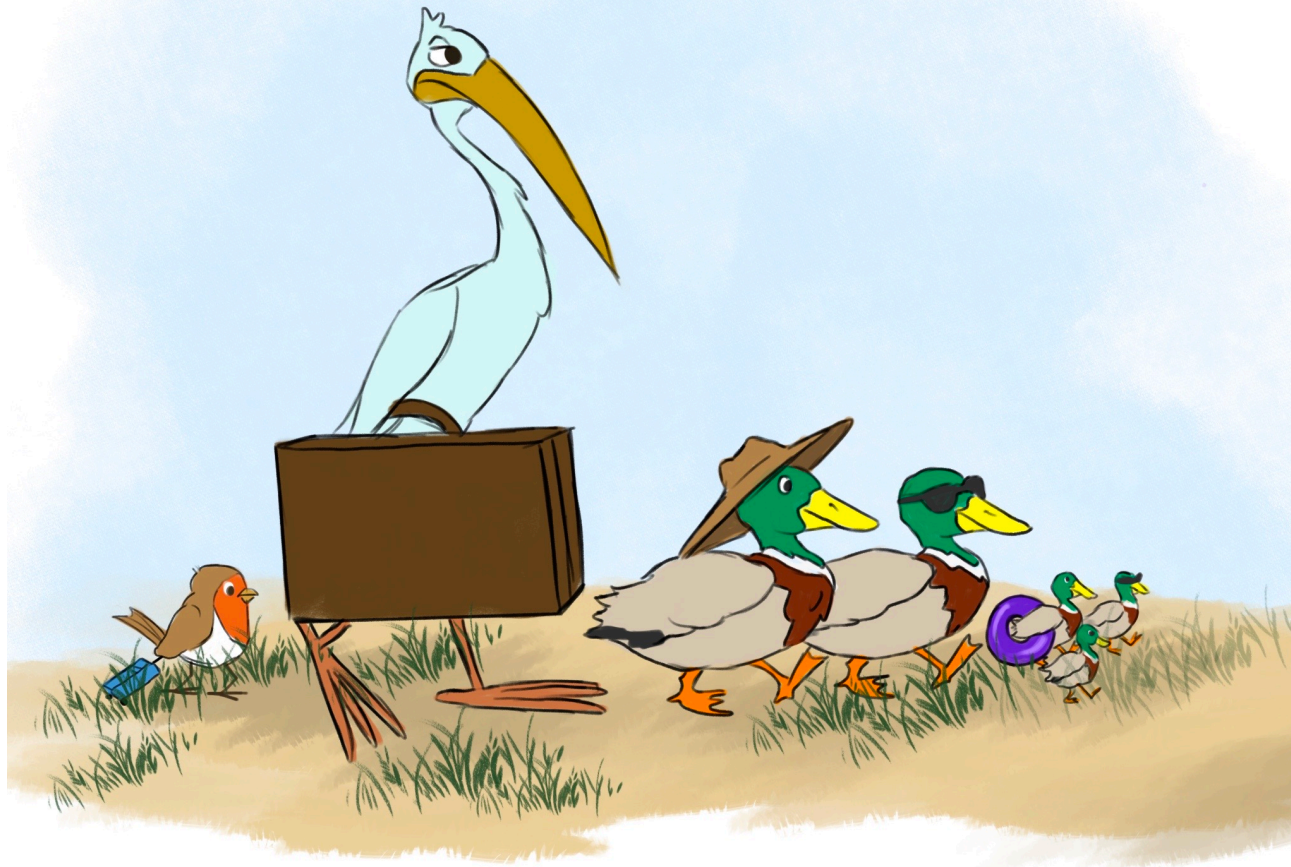




Because the amount of water changes during the seasons, riparian environments change as well. When the rivers flood, they create cells of water where ducks, geese and other water birds can gather.

Birds that normally live as far North as Canada, come down here for the winter when it is warmer here. Our bosque is an important place for birds to rest for short periods while they travel south or nest for an entire season.





When the cells dry out, the animals migrate back to their summer home, and desert river animals that were hibernating come out to live along their summer river home.

Can you find out which species of animals are visiting the Rio Bosque right now?

By using clues such as scat, footprints, bird sightings, and animal calls, you can?

