



PROTECTING OUR

COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS

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A COMIC BOOK

PRESENTED BY



TO RAISE
AWARENESS

ELLA

THE SAND
RYEGRASS

FIRM BELIEVER IN A
PRISTINE RIPARIAN BUFFER
STRIP

PROTECT
OUR COASTAL
AREAS

MILO
THE GULL

CLEVER STRATEGIST AND REALIST



BOB
THE SPARROW

VIGOROUS PROTECTOR
OF THE TERRITORY

FIONA
THE SEAL

CURIOUS MULTI-TASKER

PROTECTING OUR COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS

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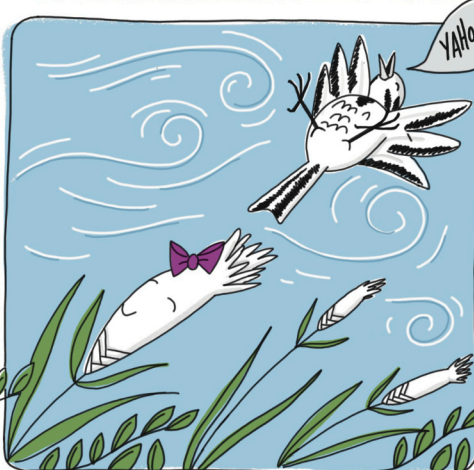
STRENGTH in NUMBERS

BOB
THE SPARROW

SURVEYS HIS
TERRITORY



A family of sand ryegrass
sways gently in the
coastal breeze.



All is well in this cozy coastal
area until **HECTOR** shows up...



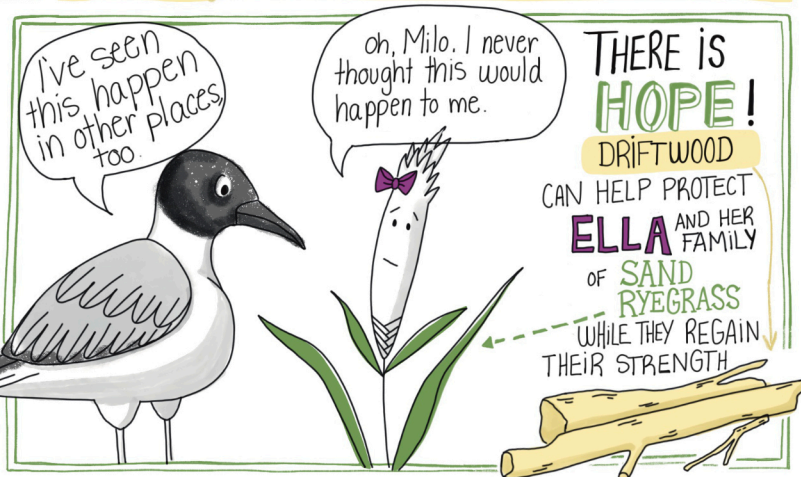
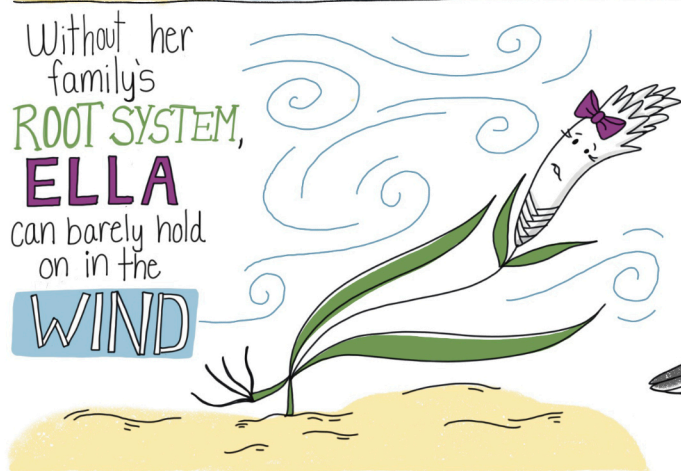
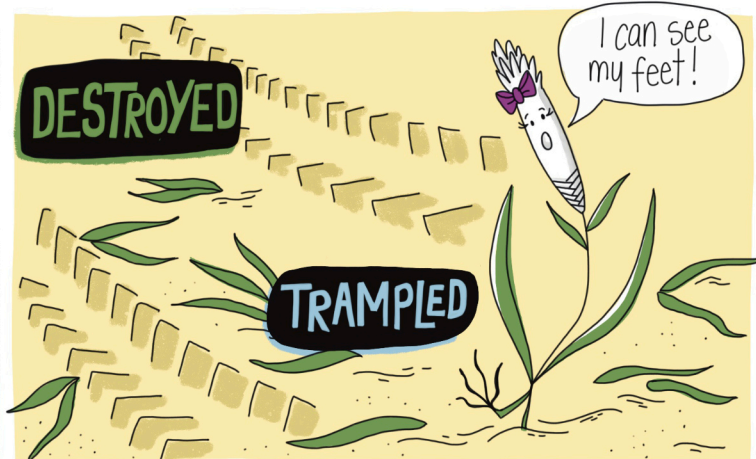
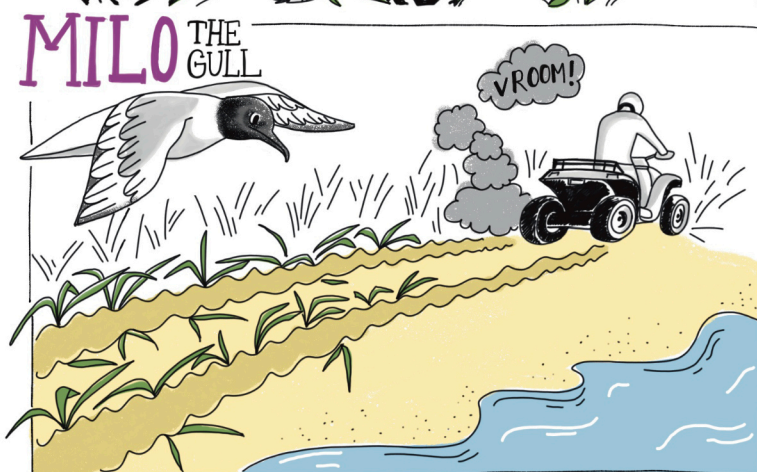
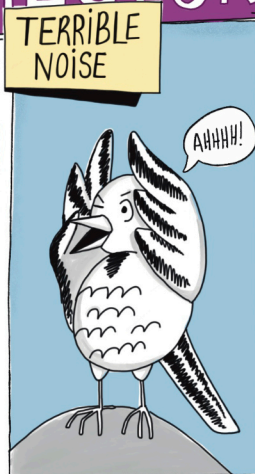
THE RIPARIAN BUFFER STRIP

Did you know that...

- A **riparian buffer strip** is a group of plants—like Ella—that borders a body of water and protects the living environments of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. It has a minimum width of 10 to 15 metres. **Diversity** is its greatest strength!
- Pay close attention to pages 6, 10 and 15. You'll find great examples of riparian buffer strips!
- Will you be able to spot Ella (**the sand ryegrass**) the next time you're at the beach?



THE DESOLATION OF HECTOR



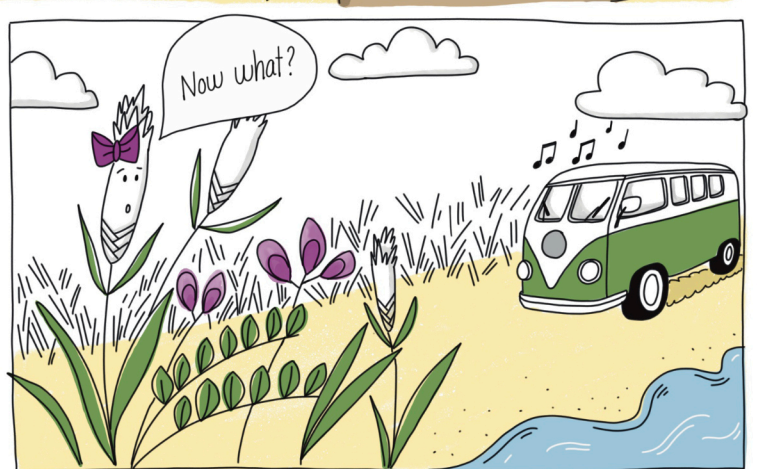
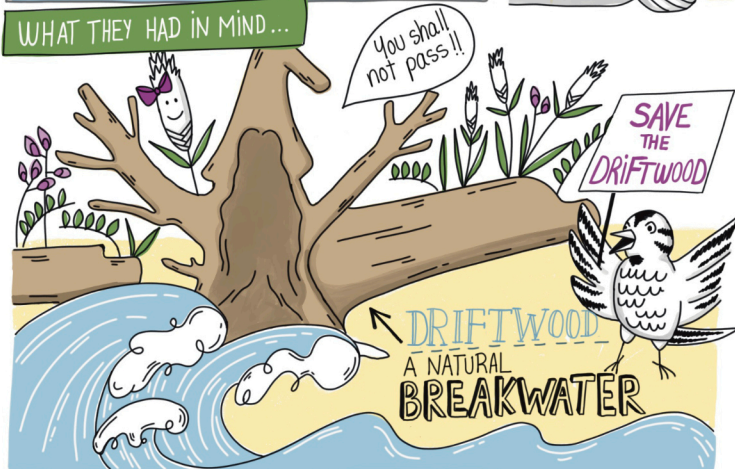
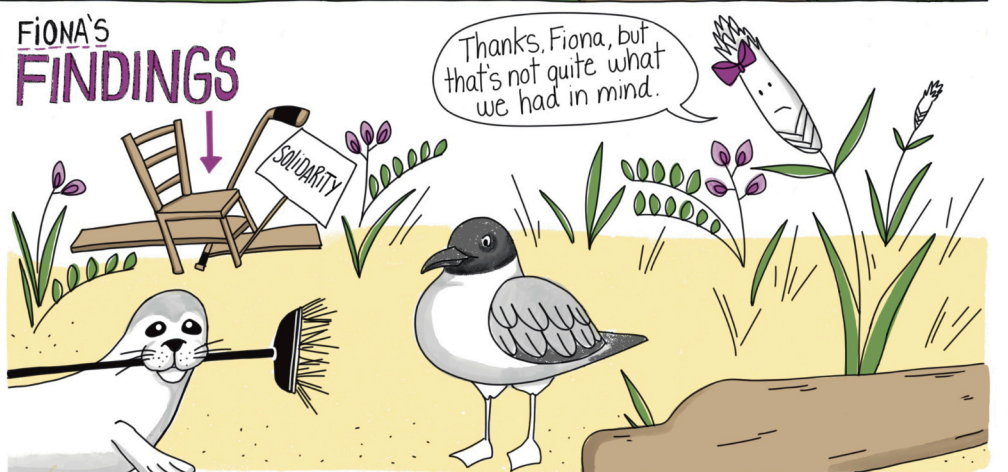
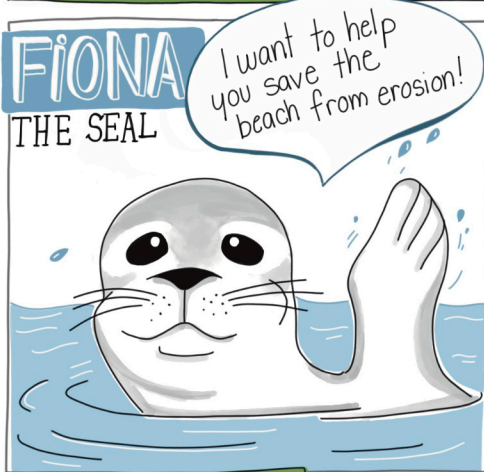
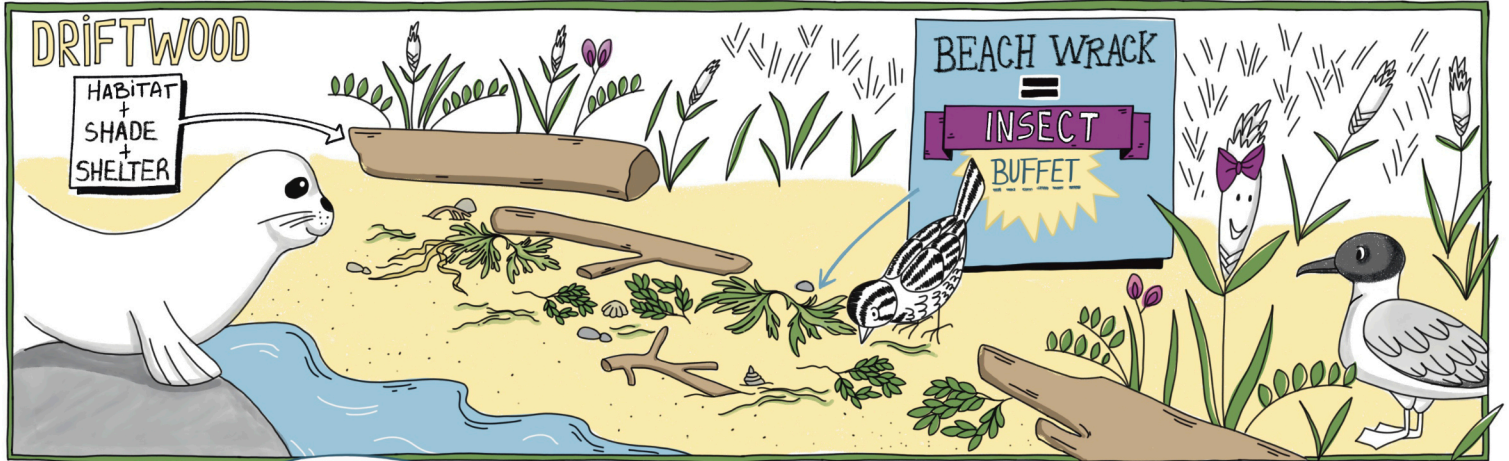
TRAMPLING AND OFF-TRACK DRIVING

Did you know that...

- Plants hold the soil in place with their **roots**. That's why Ella is important in preventing erosion!
- Erosion** is caused by wind, waves, tides and storms that carry sediment away.
- It's harder for plants to prevent the soil from eroding if they're **trampled** on by vehicles or people.



AGAINST WIND AND TIDES



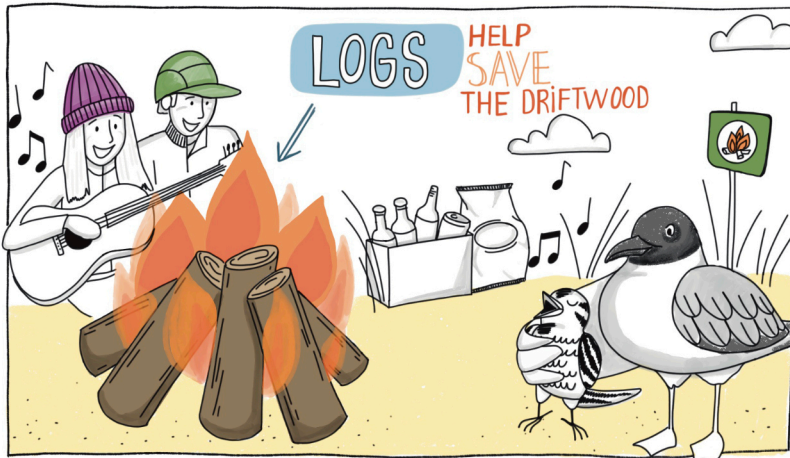
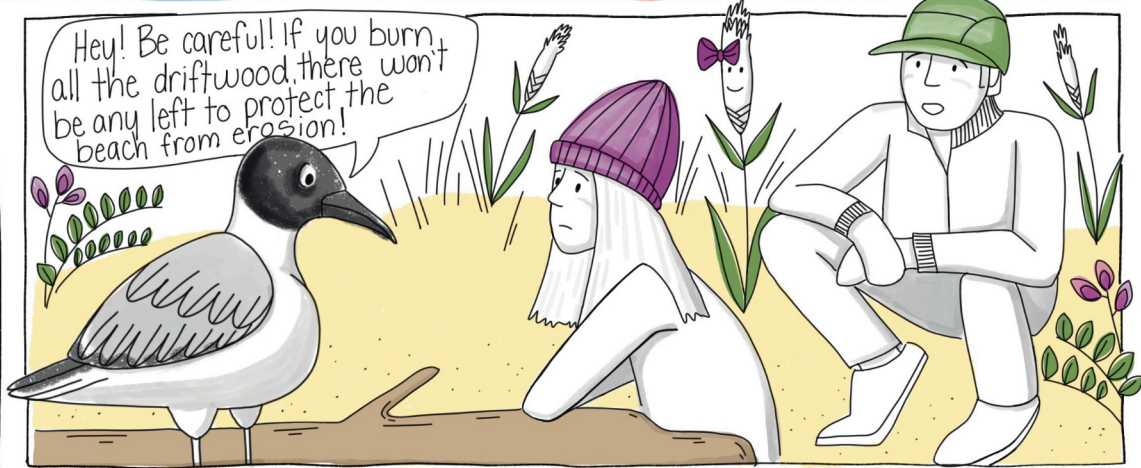
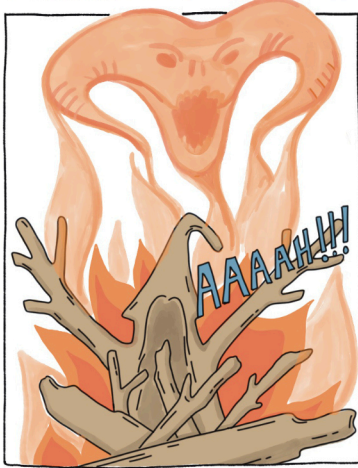
DRIFTWOOD AND BEACH WRACK

Did you know that...

- **Driftwood** helps keep the soil in place, which in turn helps plants take root. It can travel hundreds of kilometres before washing up on the shore. You'll find it on all natural beaches in Quebec.
- **Beach wrack** is an essential food source for coastal wildlife. It's composed of algae, shells and other debris washed up on the shore by the tides. It eventually breaks down and turns into nutrients for the vegetation.



PLAYING WITH FIRE



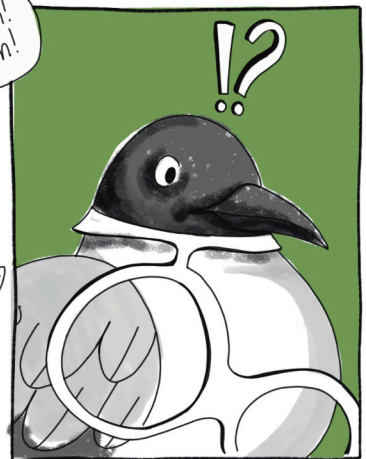
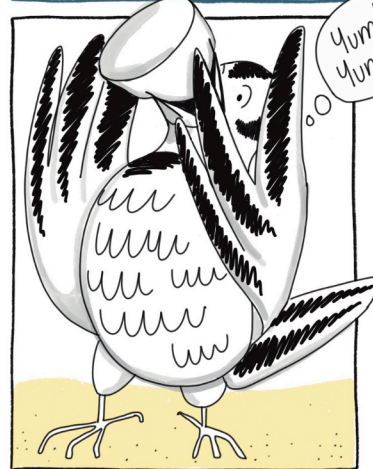
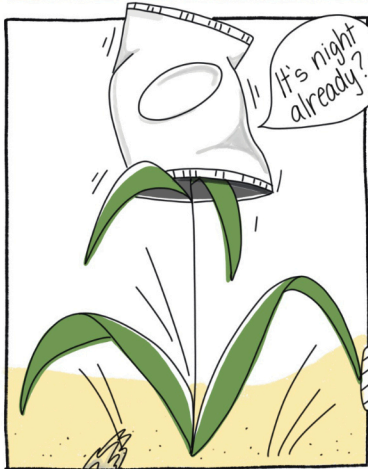
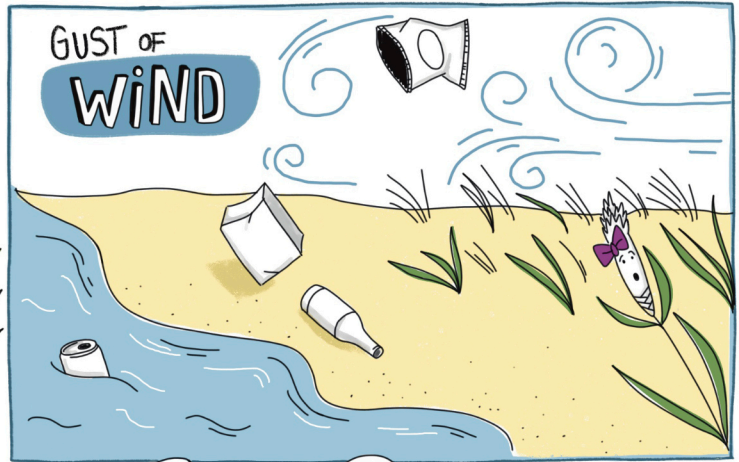
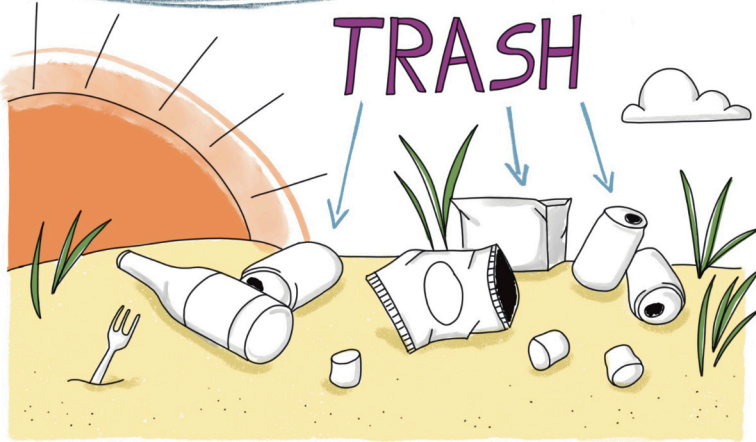
BONFIRES

Did you know that...

- Driftwood is saturated with **sea salts**, and it releases toxins that are harmful to our health when burned. That's why it's best to leave it on the beach—where it's needed most!
- It's important to use locally cut wood to build a fire because wood transported from another region can carry **parasites** that are harmful to the local vegetation. For more information, visit www.canadainvasives.ca to learn more about the Buy Local, Burn Local program.

U. NIDENTIFIED F. LYING O. BJECT

TRASH

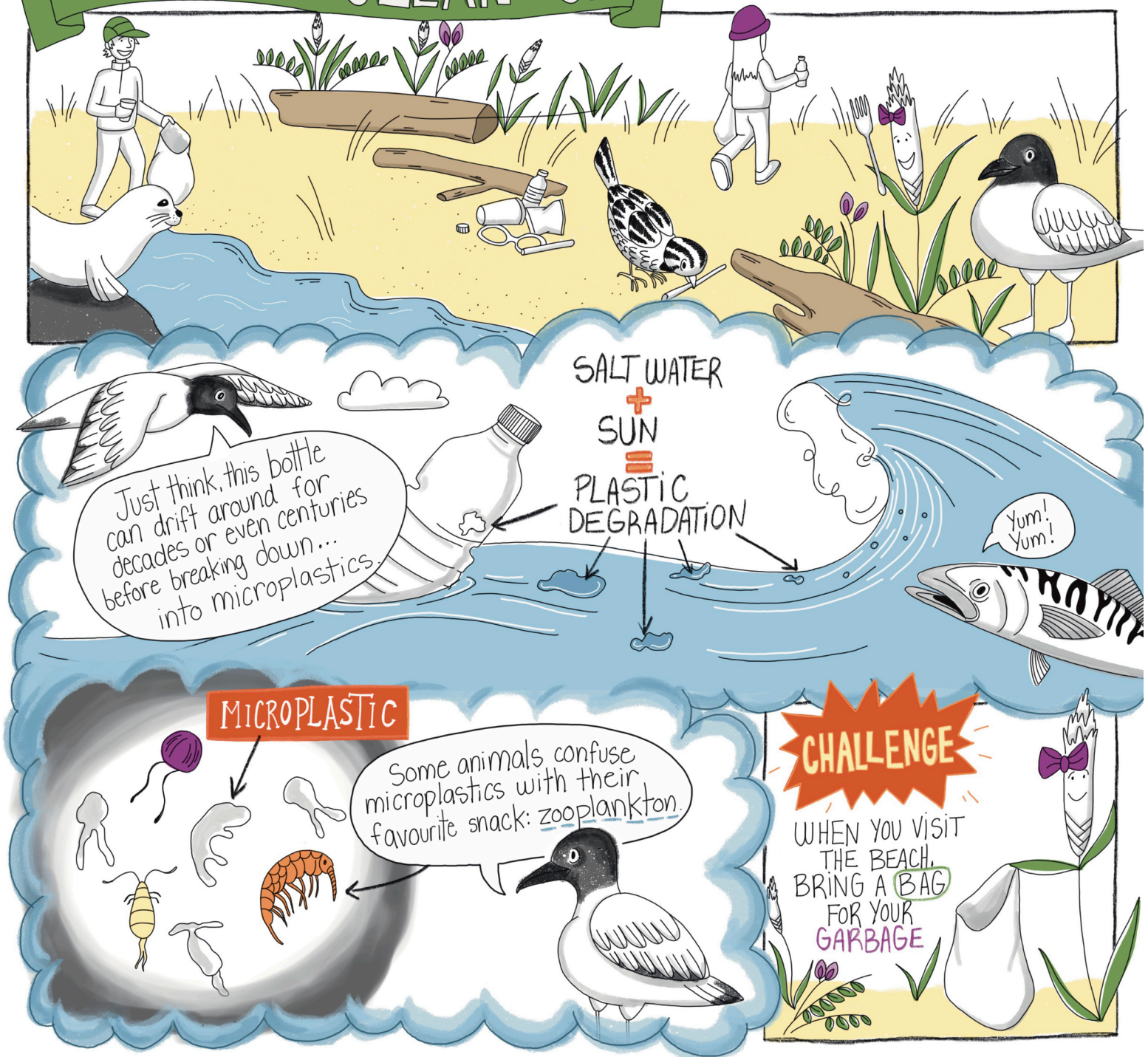


TRASH

Did you know that...

- **Sorting our trash** will help prevent it from ending up in the ocean. To learn more, visit the RECYC-QUÉBEC website and download the Ça va où? mobile app.
- Challenge: Next time you're at the beach or on a boat, bring **zero-waste** snacks with you. The best kind of waste is no waste in the first place!

THE BIG CLEAN-UP



MICROPLASTICS

Did you know that...

- In addition to plastic waste, microplastics also come from synthetic fabrics (35%), tires (28%), paint for roads and boats (11%) and toiletries containing plastic microbeads (2%).
- Complying with The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace will help reduce the production of microplastics and ensure the sustainability of coastal activities. For more information, visit the Leave No Trace Canada website.
- Learn how to clean up the rivers and coastal areas with your family and friends by visiting the **Mission 1000 tonnes** website at mission1000tonnes.com.

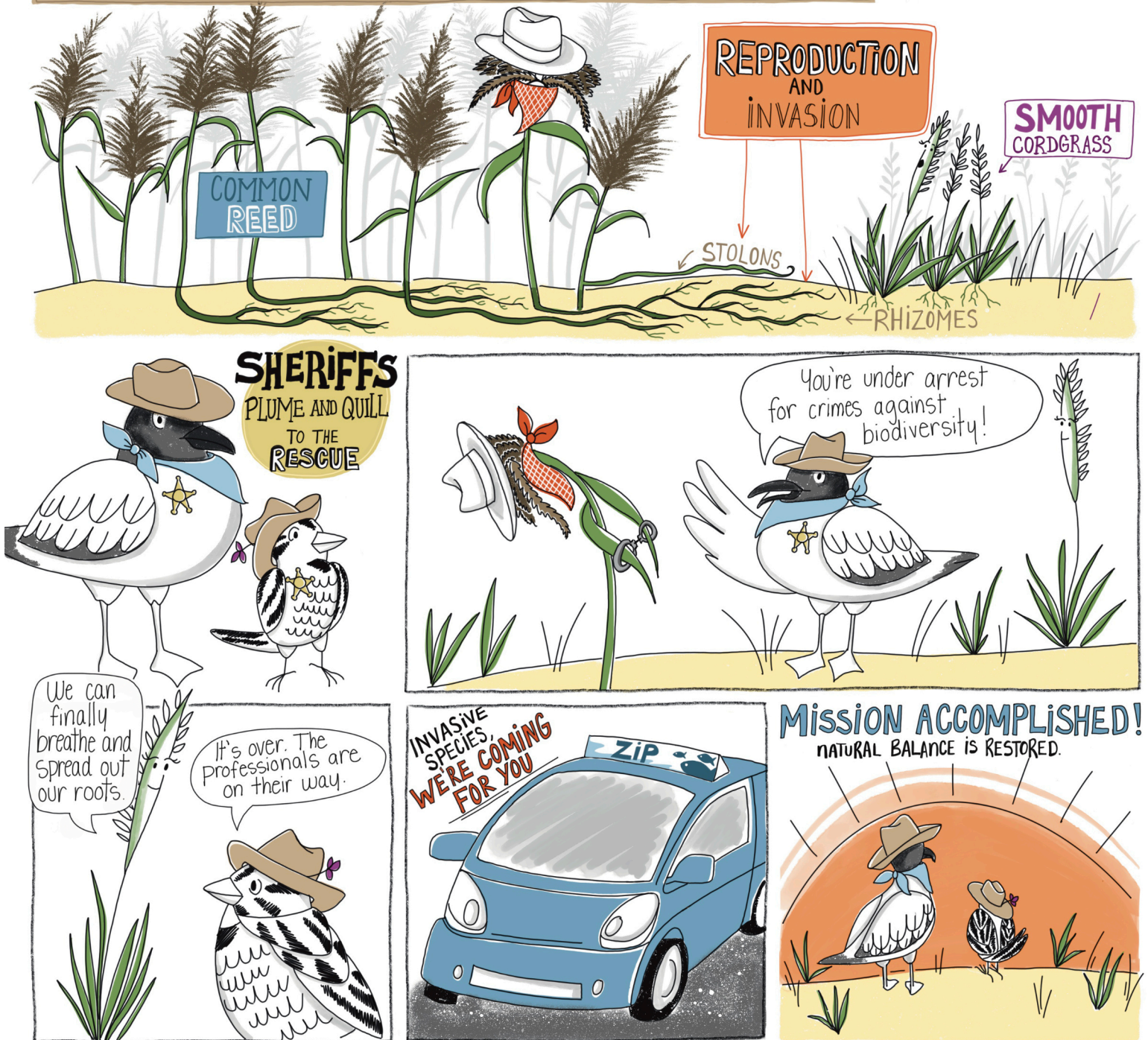


WETLANDS AND HABITATS

Did you know that...

- A **wetland** is a natural area (marsh, pond or peatland) that's often flooded or filled with water.
- With their diverse and abundant vegetation, wetlands are **home** to many animal species, including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. A wetland is an environment teeming with life!
- Wetlands are like **sponges**. When it rains, they absorb water to prevent flooding. During a dry spell, they release water to hydrate the soil and plants.

THE SPARROW, THE GULL AND THE REED



INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (IAS)

Did you know that...

- Invasive alien species (IAS) are plants or animals from other regions that are introduced to a new environment, often through human activity. They're detrimental to the survival of local (or native) species and to the **biodiversity**, which Milo mentions on page 10.
- The **common reed** (*Phragmites australis*) is an IAS that was introduced more than a century ago! It grows in very dense clusters and can reach up to five metres tall! It has a bushy, beige-coloured feathery panicle. It often grows near roads and in wetlands. If you see it, call Comité ZIP Gaspésie!



VITAL SPACE



COEXISTENCE WITH WILDLIFE

Did you know that...

- Our beach activities can disturb nearby young seals and migratory birds. That's why it's important to keep a safe distance and avoid making a lot of noise (playing loud music, flying drones, walking dogs near these animals, etc.).
- If you see a marine mammal that's stranded or in distress, stay back and call the **Quebec Marine Mammal Emergency Response Network** at 1-877-722-5346 before doing anything else!

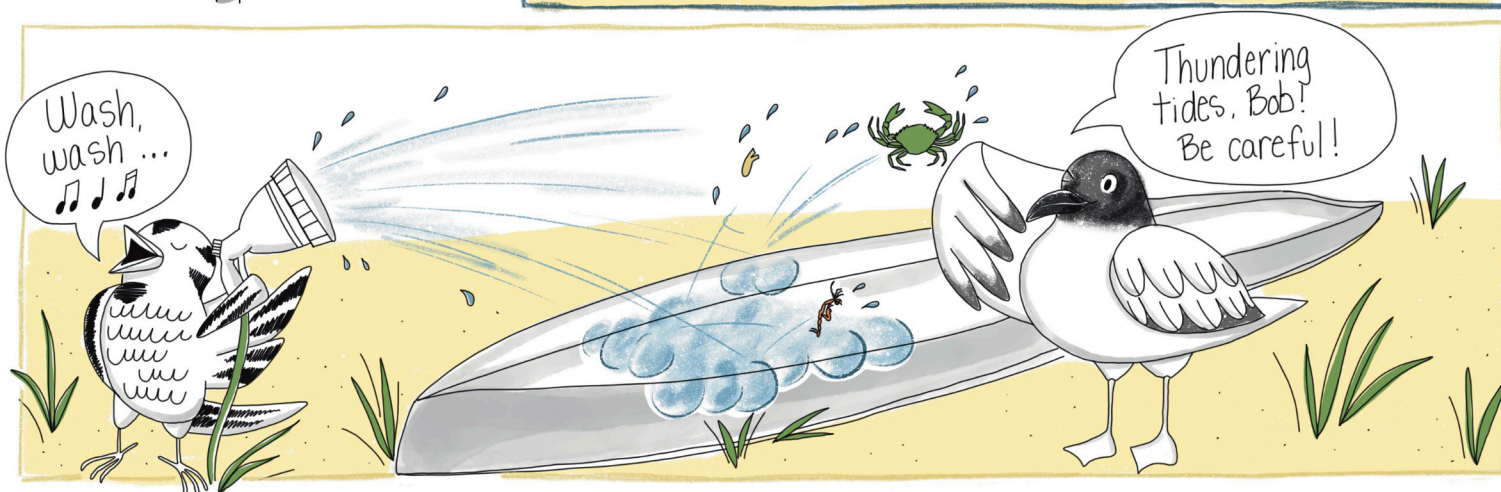
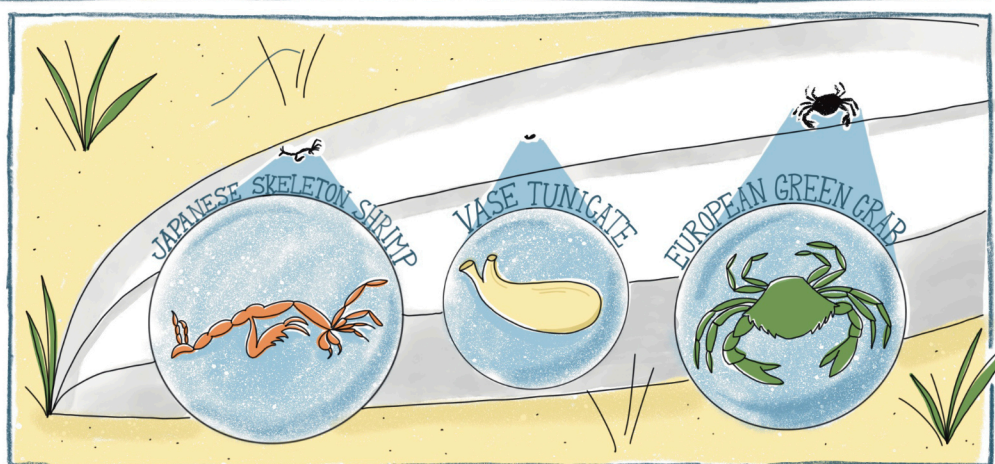
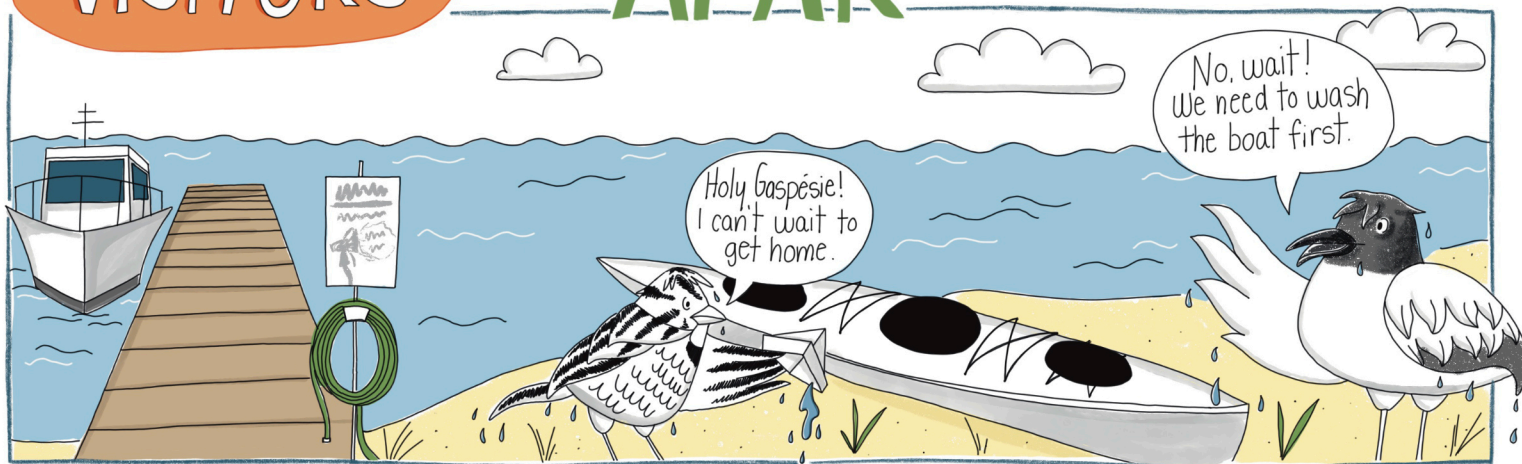


DISTURBANCE TO WILDLIFE

Did you know that...

- When boats, kayaks and other watercraft are in close range of marine wildlife, they can interfere with these animals' essential activities, such as feeding, breeding and communicating. To limit their stress, it's best to keep away from these animals while on the water.
- Noise travels five times faster underwater than through the air and is five times louder! To be on the safe side, you should keep at least **200 metres** away from marine mammals.

VISITORS FROM AFAR



AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

Did you know that...

- The Japanese skeleton shrimp, the vase tunicate and the European green crab are **invasive alien species** like the common reed, except they live in water. They're harmful to other aquatic species because they feed on the same food sources and take up too much space, leaving little room for other species. It's always a good idea to share our space and resources with others, don't you think?
- **It's important to wash your boat** after removing it from the water! When you take your watercraft to a different region or body of water, you run the risk of **introducing aquatic invasive species (AIS)**, which can be difficult to see with the naked eye.

SEARCH AND FIND

9 WAYS

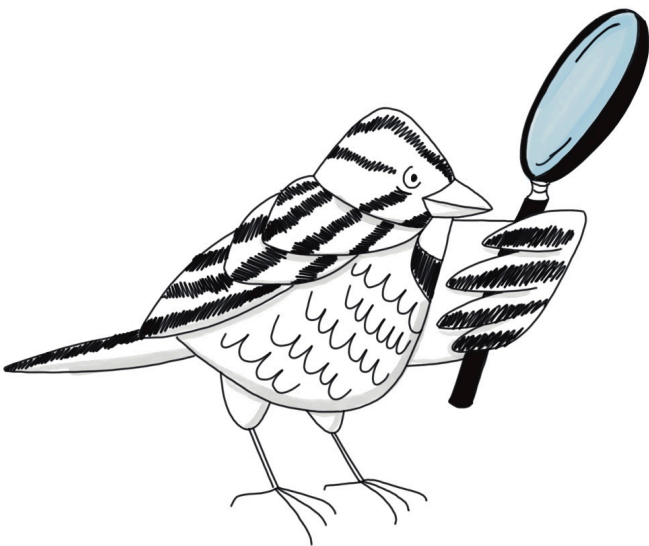
TO
PROTECT
OUR
COASTAL AREAS



SEARCH AND FIND

Which action can...

- 1. Prevent the spread of invasive alien species?
- 2. Stop vegetation from being trampled on and in turn, prevent erosion?
- 3. Help coastal areas withstand major storms?
- 4. Protect the diversity of vegetated riparian buffer strips?
- 5. Help keep soil in place for plants to take root?
- 6. Reduce environmental pollution and the formation of microplastics?
- 7. Help us to peacefully coexist with wildlife?
- 8. Preserve driftwood and prevent erosion?
- 9. Answer our questions about how to protect our coastal environments?



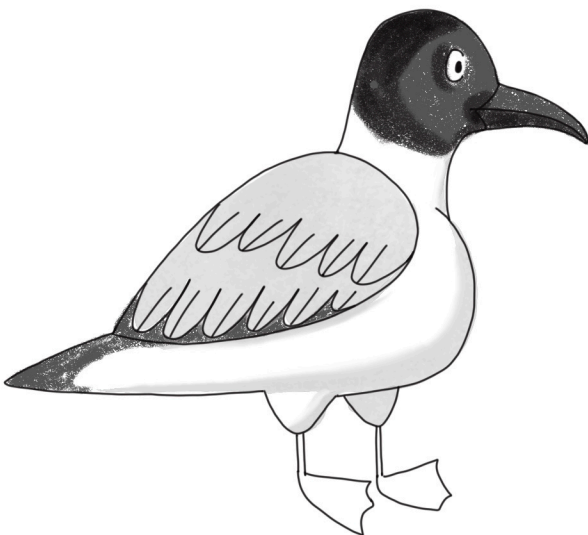
- ANSWERS
- 1. Washing our boat, using locally purchased logs to build a fire.
 - 2. Staying on marked trails. Vehicles are for the road, not for the beach. (In fact, driving on the beach and shoreline is prohibited in Quebec.)
 - 3. Having a wide riparian buffer strip planted with diverse vegetation.
 - 4. Reducing the spread of invasive alien species.
 - 5. Leaving driftwood on the beach.
 - 6. Picking up and sorting our trash.
 - 7. Keeping the required distance away from marine mammals and other wildlife.
 - 8. Using locally purchased logs to build a fire.
 - 9. Contacting Comité ZIP Gaspésie!

COMITÉ ZIP GASPÉSIE

Awareness. Consultation. Action.

Through consultations and community-based projects, Comité ZIP rallies the public to promote integrated management of the St. Lawrence. By acquiring and sharing knowledge and through its various actions, Comité ZIP plays a key role in the conservation, restoration and development of Gaspésie's marine and coastal areas.

With this comic book, Comité ZIP Gaspésie strives to promote best practices in coastal conservation. Informing the public of the importance of this issue is essential in helping to preserve these sensitive environments and ensuring the sustainability of coastal activities. A comic book is a fun way to connect with kids, who, in turn, will likely share the information with the adults in their life.



We would like to thank all our financial partners and sponsors who made this incredible project possible:

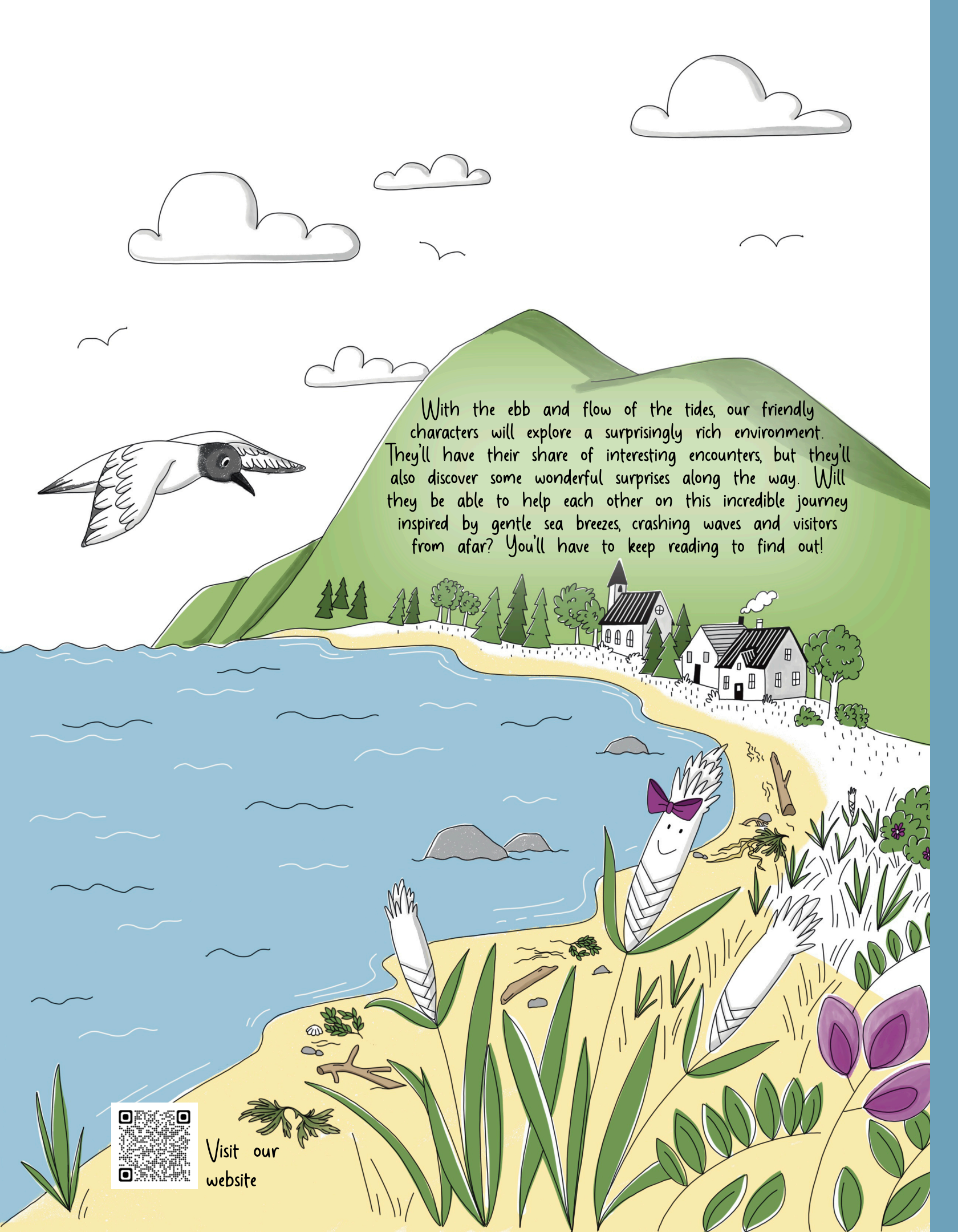


Canada 

Québec 

This project was made possible through an investment under the Community Interactions Program, which is part of the St. Lawrence Action Plan 2011-2026, and is implemented by the governments of Canada and Québec.





With the ebb and flow of the tides, our friendly characters will explore a surprisingly rich environment. They'll have their share of interesting encounters, but they'll also discover some wonderful surprises along the way. Will they be able to help each other on this incredible journey inspired by gentle sea breezes, crashing waves and visitors from afar? You'll have to keep reading to find out!



Visit our
website