



# Finding out where plants live

A habitat is the place where a living thing is best suited to live, and where it finds shelter, food and others of its own kind.

Now we have seen that living things make use of their environment to get food, and that they can move and change, it is time to look at the environment around them.

A place where a living thing makes its home is called its **HABITAT**.

## Habitats

Habitats come in all shapes and sizes.

There are microbes living in our bodies, in our eyes, ears and so on. Most do you no harm, but to them an ear, a mouth or an eye is home – it is their habitat.

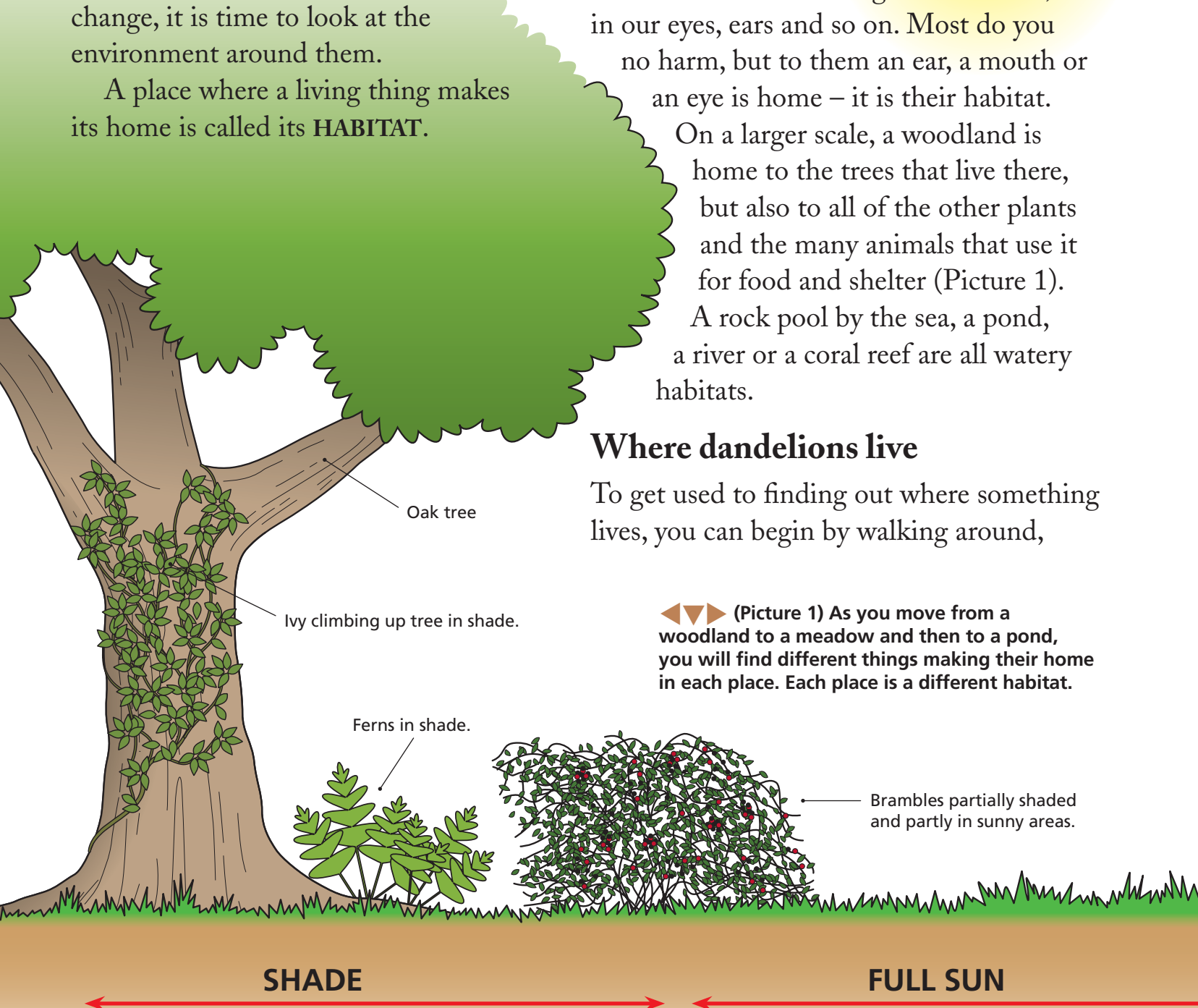
On a larger scale, a woodland is home to the trees that live there, but also to all of the other plants and the many animals that use it for food and shelter (Picture 1).

A rock pool by the sea, a pond, a river or a coral reef are all watery habitats.

## Where dandelions live

To get used to finding out where something lives, you can begin by walking around,

◀▶▶ (Picture 1) As you move from a woodland to a meadow and then to a pond, you will find different things making their home in each place. Each place is a different habitat.





◀ (Picture 2) The open ground in this grassy meadow contains dandelions (grey seed heads) and buttercups (yellow flowers) in among the green grass.



▲ (Picture 3) The leaves and flowers of a water lily float on the still surface water of a pond.

close to your home or school, and looking at the common plants you find there. Then notice where they are common and where they are uncommon.

Look for the bright-yellow dandelion, for example. You should find it on the school playing field, in your garden or in a park.

What do all of these places have in common that a dandelion would like? They are open places with lots of sunshine. Dandelions cannot grow in the shade, so they choose a sunny place for their home (habitat) (Picture 2).

## Where water lilies live

Water lilies have large leaves that float on water. Many garden ponds have them. You can also see them in the ponds of parks (Picture 3).

If you look at a water lily, you will find it has long, floppy stalks. These are good for allowing the leaves to bob up and down in the water, but they do not have the strength to hold the plant up on dry land.

The water lily has roots, so the whole plant doesn't float. The water lily has its home (its habitat) in shallow ponds and swamps, not in deep open water.

### Summary

- A habitat is where something lives.
- You can find out about where plants live by studying the area where you find them.

