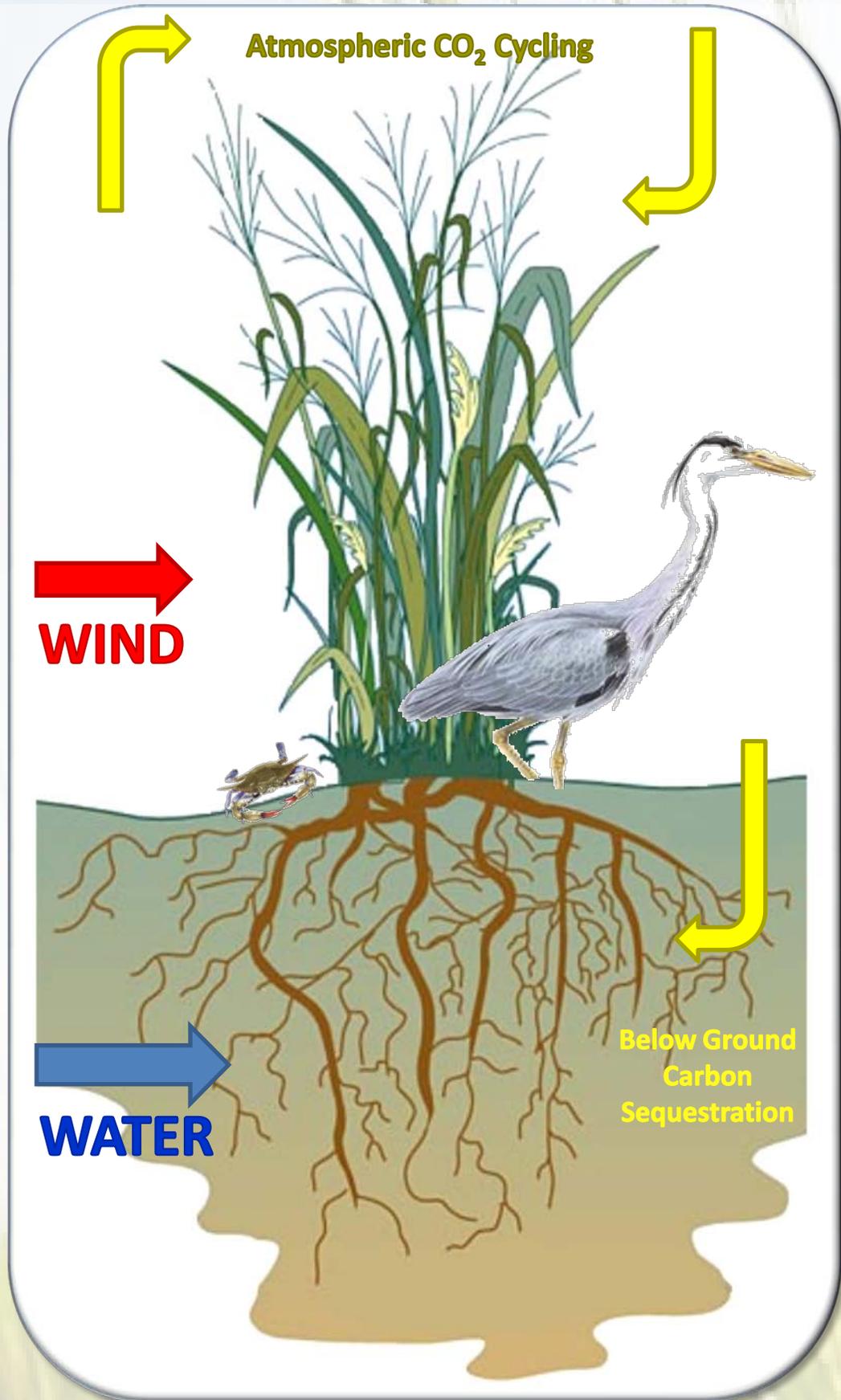


# WHY IS SWITCHGRASS IMPORTANT?



Removes carbon dioxide from the air as it grows. Switchgrass "recycles" CO<sub>2</sub> with each year's cycle of growth and use. Each acre of switchgrass can sequester the equivalent of 5 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> each year.

Switchgrass grown for biofuel production produced 540 percent more energy than needed to grow, harvest and process it into cellulosic ethanol, compared with just roughly 25 percent more energy returned by corn-based ethanol according to the most optimistic studies.

This perennial adds organic matter—the plants extend nearly as far below ground as above. Switchgrass holds onto the soil to prevent erosion and decreases wind flow and evaporation.

Provides ideal cover for ground-nesting birds and invertebrates

Buffer strips of switchgrass, planted around wetlands, could remove soil particles, pesticides, and fertilizer residues from water before it reaches the Bay.

Pest and disease resistance; can serve as a buffer to existing annual crops -- corn, soybeans, wheat -- by reducing pest invasion can limit the need for chemical applications.

Tolerance of poor soils and wide variations of soil pH ; Low fertility needs and drought and flood tolerance.



These grasses will be planted in the Chesapeake Bay during NOAA Restoration Day activities in June.

**NOAA RESTORATION DAY**

For more information or to volunteer go to:  
<http://restorationday.noaa.gov>

