

Georgia's 12 Seasons

Winter

Fool's Spring

Second Winter

Spring of Deception

Third Winter

The Pollening

Actual Spring

Summer

Hell's Front Porch

False Fall

Second Summer

Actual Fall

You Are
Here!



Preparing for Actual Spring

- Actual Spring means **AFTER** April 15!
- For established perennial beds, little prep is needed other than:
 - Weeding
 - Side dressing with compost
 - Refreshing the mulch

But, preparing NEW beds....

- What's growing there now?
- Weeds? Uh, oh, need to improve this soil.
- Vines or unwanted bushes? Better
- Trees? Even better!

Like begets like.....

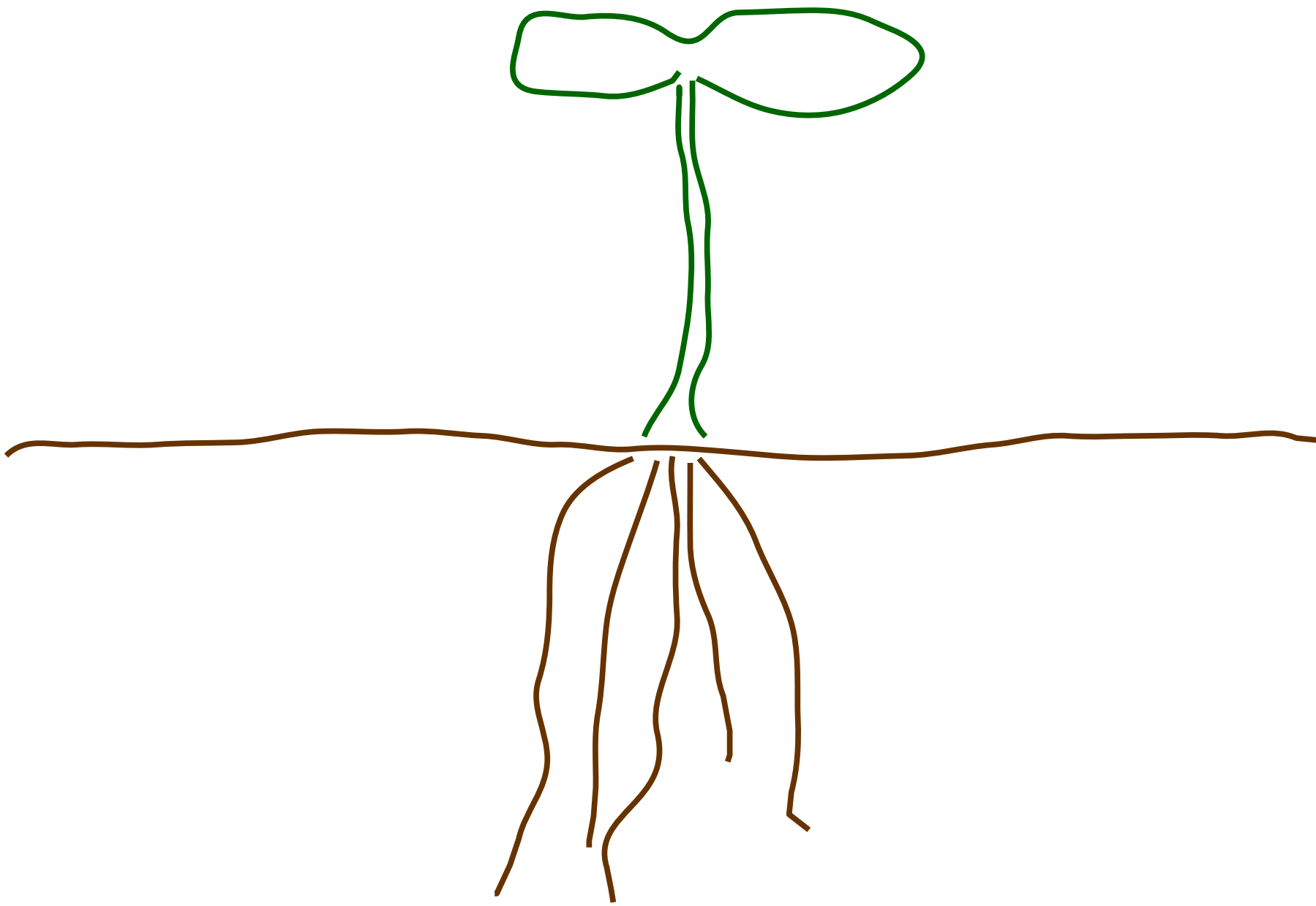
- What's in place now shows the current bacteria to fungi ratio in the soil and dictates what will grow there unless the soil is “improved”.
- How does what's growing there now affect the soil? It's the magic of the “soil-food web”.

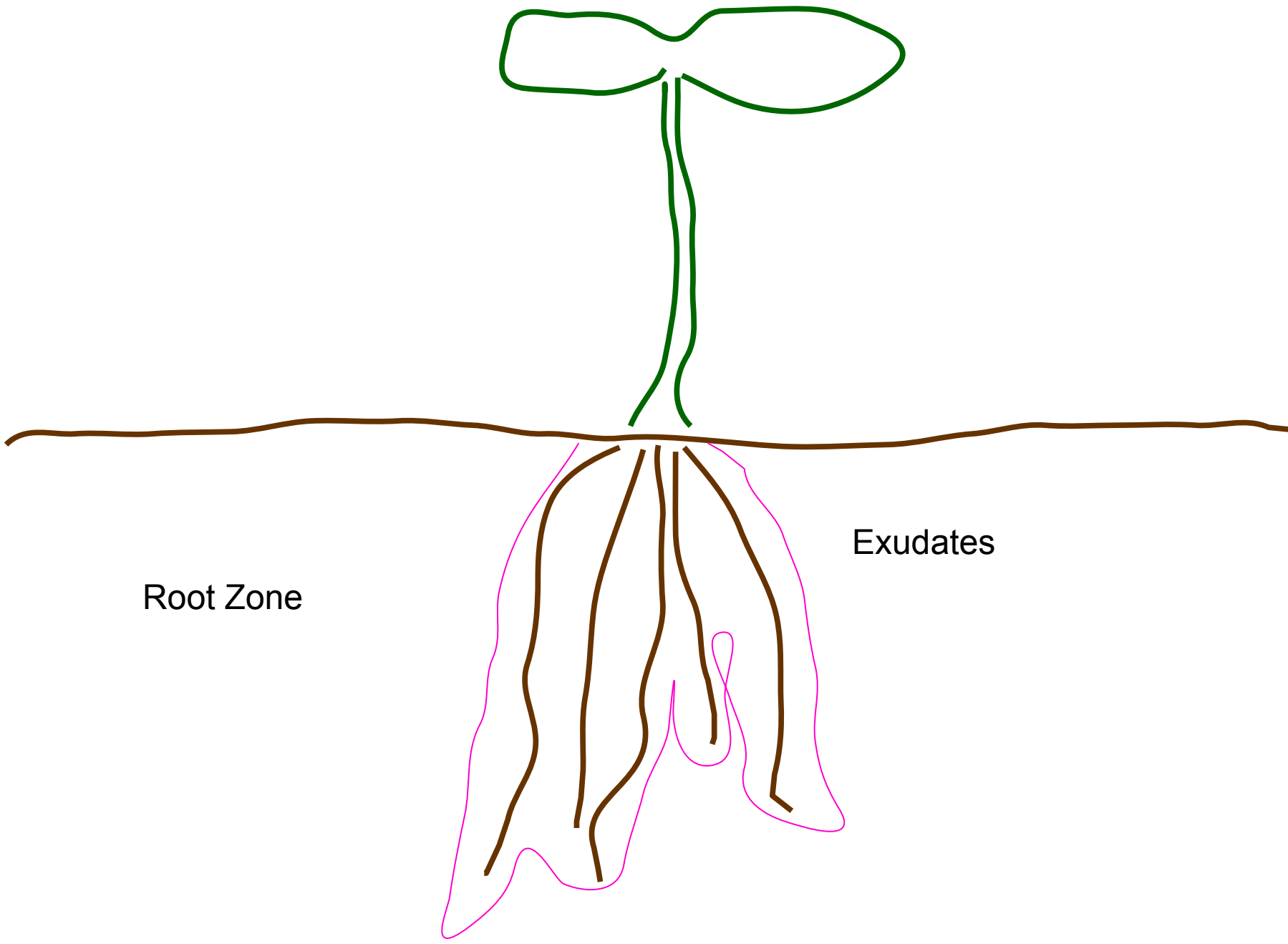
“Typical” Soil

- 45 % mineral
- 40 % air
- 10 % water
- 5 % organic matter

Where are the Nutrients?

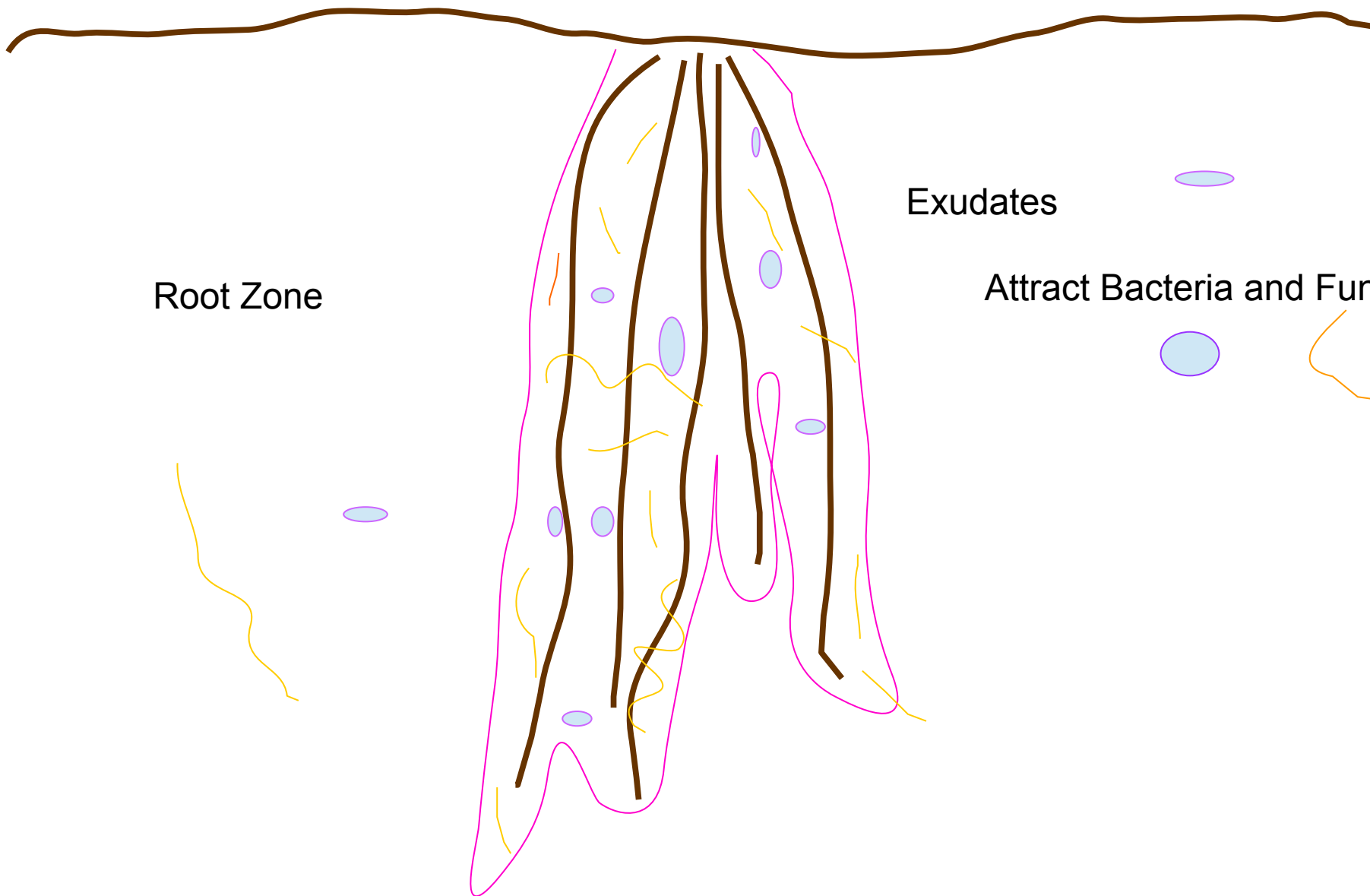
- Hydrogen and Oxygen are in the water
- Carbon, some nitrogen are in the air
- Most are trapped in the minerals in forms unusable by plants (iron, phosphorus, potassium, copper and many more)
- It's the living organisms in the organic matter which absorb those nutrients and “poop” them out in plant-usable form.





Root Zone

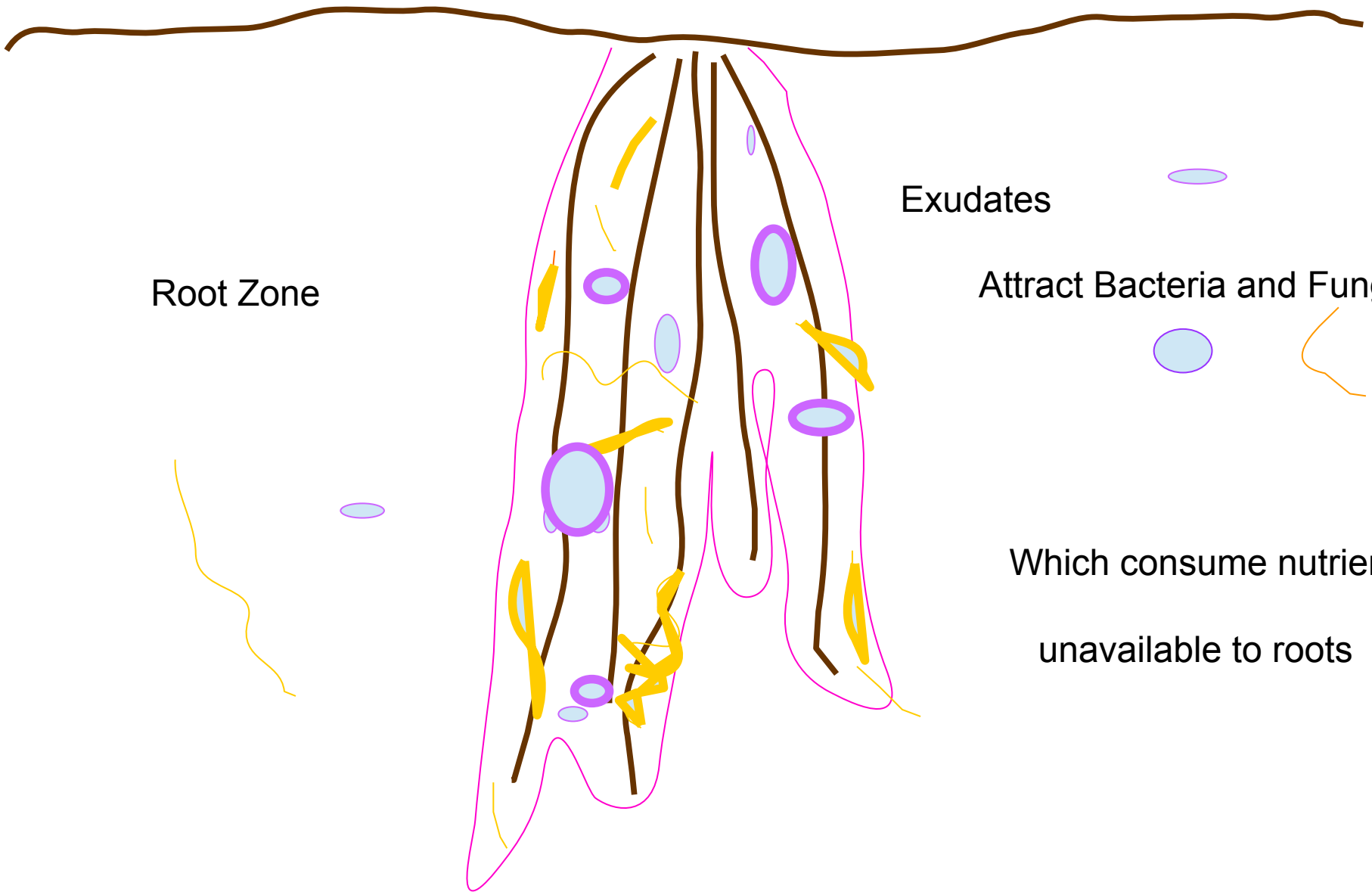
Exudates



Root Zone

Exudates

Attract Bacteria and Fungi

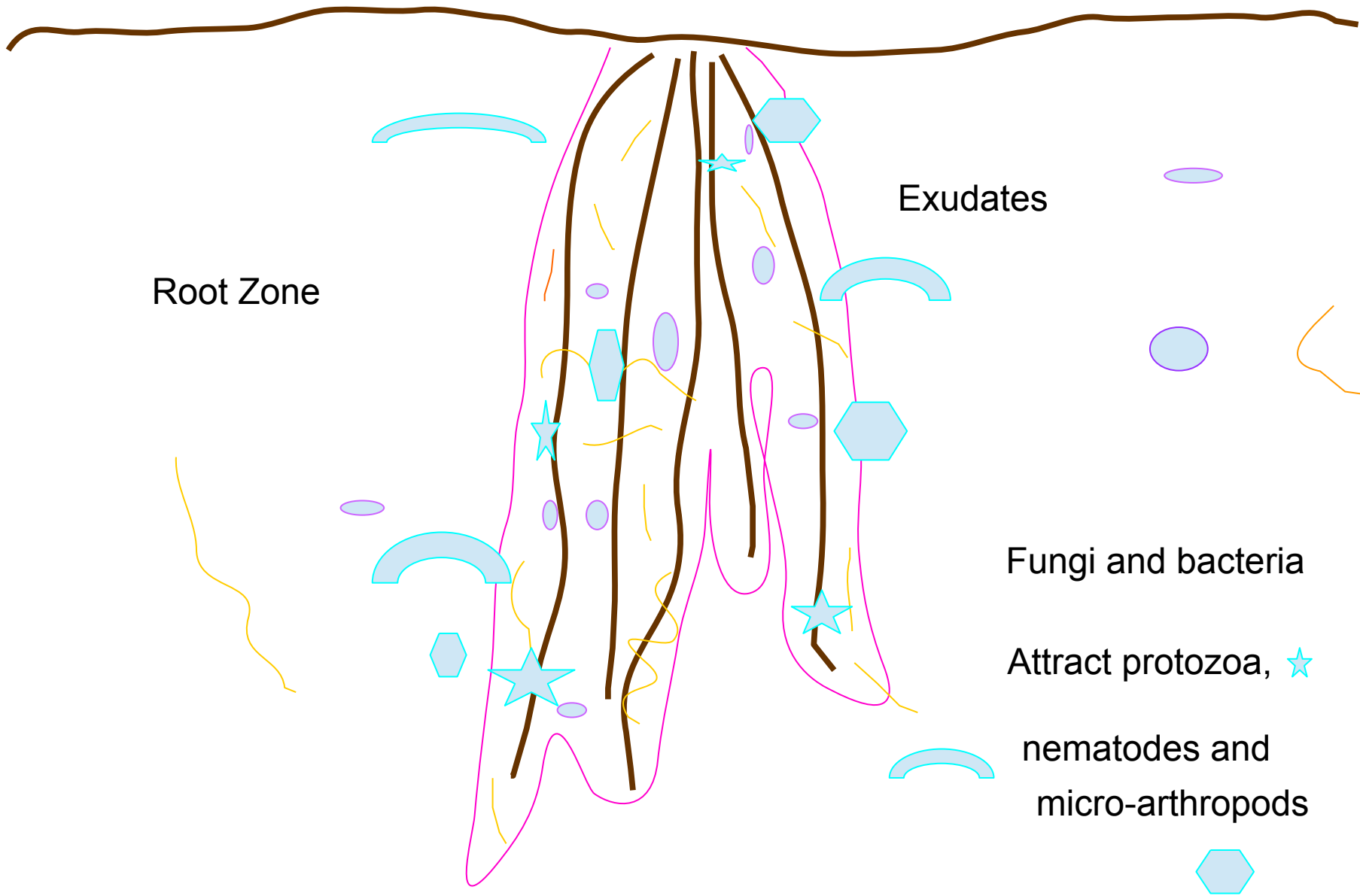


Root Zone

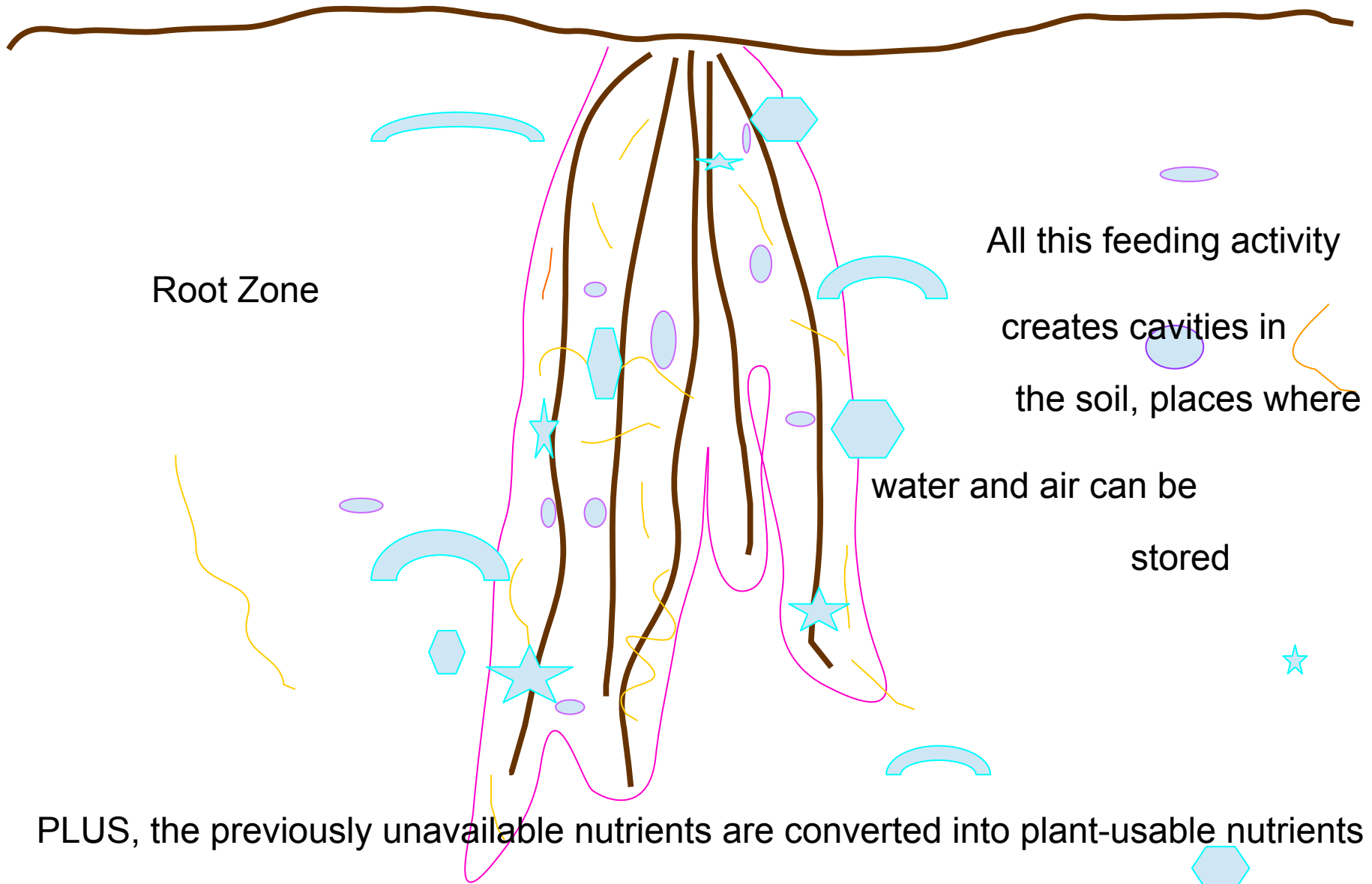
Exudates

Attract Bacteria and Fungi

Which consume nutrients
unavailable to roots



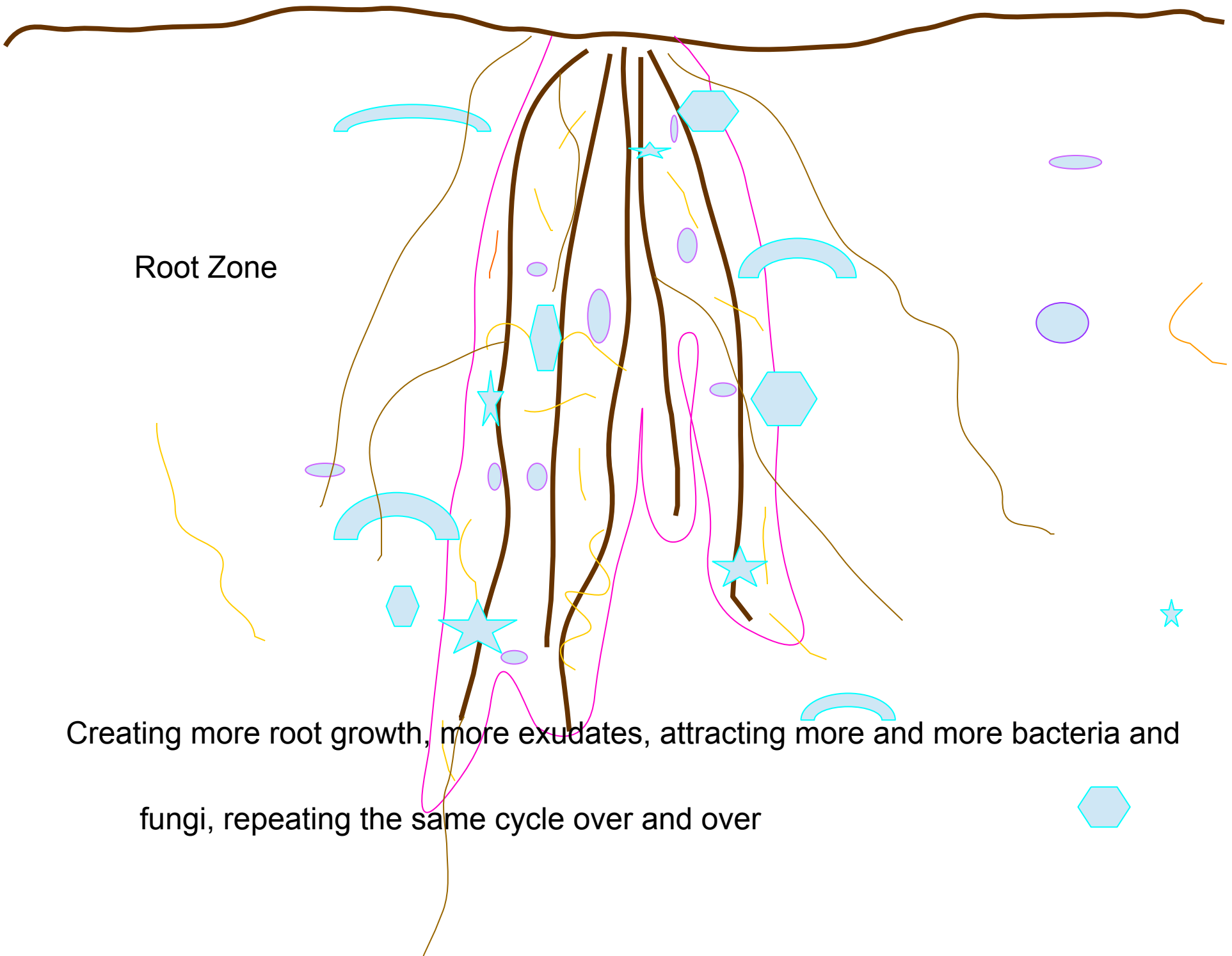
Protozoa, nematodes and micro-arthropods attract worms and insects.



Root Zone

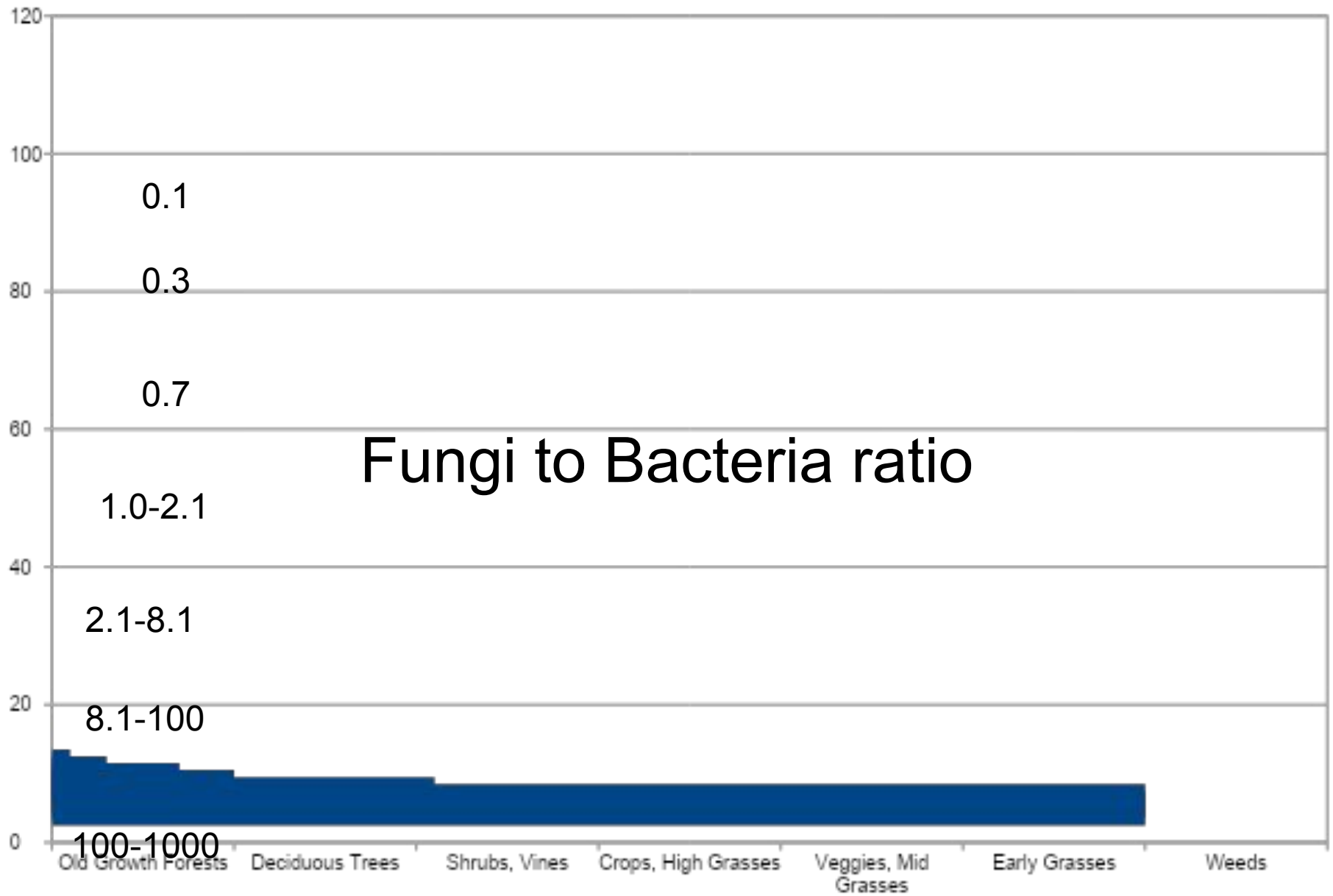
All this feeding activity
creates cavities in
the soil, places where
water and air can be
stored

PLUS, the previously unavailable nutrients are converted into plant-usable nutrients
by the consumers, which squish juices from the consumed bacteria and fungi!



Root Zone

Creating more root growth, more exudates, attracting more and more bacteria and fungi, repeating the same cycle over and over



“Ideal” Soil

- 95% organic matter
- 5% everything else

Ways to Improve Soil

- Add organic matter!

How?

- For new garden beds:
- Work compost into freshly dug soil to at least 10" depth
- Heugleculture
- Top dress with compost
- For planted garden beds:
- Side dress with compost
- As little soil disturbance as possible
- Green mulch

And now...

- Compost is available free to DeKalb residents:
 - Northern Ave & Memorial Dr (next to Tax Comm. Office)
 - North Transfer Station, 4600 Buford Hwy, Chamblee
 - Seminole Road Landfill, 4203 Clevefont Rd, Ellenwood
 - East Transfer Station, 1750 Rogers Lake Rd, Lithonia
- Show your driver's license to prove you are a DeKalb resident
- Shovel away into your truck, bags, etc.

Even easier...

- Compost can be delivered to your location at a cost of \$75 for 10 cubic yards.
- Additional info about county-supplied compost can be had by calling (404)-687-4030 or www.dekalbcountyga.gov/sanitation/mulch-and-compost