

Ecosystems Vocabulary

1. **Ecosystem**: All the living and non-living things in an environment, including their interactions with each other.
2. **Abiotic Factor**: All non living things in an ecosystem.
3. **Biotic Factor**: All living things in an ecosystem.
4. **Producers**: Any of the plants and algae that produce oxygen and food that animals need
5. **Consumers**: Any animal that eats plants or eats other plant-eating animals
6. **Decomposers**: Any of the fungi or bacteria that break down dead plants and animals into useful things like minerals and rich soil
7. **Carnivore**: An animal that eats meat only.
8. **Herbivore**: An animals that eats plants only.
9. **Omnivore**: An animal that eats both plants and animals.
10. **Food Chain**: The path of the energy in food passed from one organism to another.
11. **Food Web**: The overlapping food chains in an ecosystem
12. **Energy Pyramid**: A graphic organizer of energy flow in a community. The different levels represent different groups of organisms that might compose a food chain.
13. **Photosynthesis**: The food making process in green plants that uses sunlight.
14. **Community**: All living things in an ecosystem (more than one population in an ecosystem).
15. **Population**: All the members of one species in an area.
16. **Species**: A group of living things that are able to breed and produce offspring who can also breed.
17. **Limiting Factor**: Anything that controls the growth or survival of a population.
18. **Niche**: An animal's role in an ecosystem.
19. **Biome**: Large ecosystem
20. **Symbiosis**: A relationship between two living things that lasts over a period of time.
21. **Mutualism**: A relationship between two living organisms where both benefit from the relationship.
22. **Parasitism**: A relationship between two living things where one organism lives on or in another organism and may harm that organism.

23. **Commensalism**: A relationship between two living things where one organism benefits from another organism without harming or helping it.
24. **Terrestrial Ecosystem**: Land based ecosystem

25. **Deciduous Forest**: A forest biome with many kinds of trees that lose their leaves each autumn
26. **Tropical Rainforest**: Hot and humid ecosystem with many trees and colorful plants and animals.
27. **Coniferous Forest (Taiga)**: A cool forest biome with evergreen trees in the upper Northern Hemisphere.
28. **Tundra**- A large, treeless plain in the arctic regions, where the ground is frozen all year.
29. **Desert**- A sandy or rocky biome, with little precipitation and little plant life.
30. **Grasslands**: A biome where grasses, not trees, are the main plant life. Prairies and savannahs are two types of grassland regions.
31. **Aquatic Ecosystem**: Water based ecosystem
32. **Estuary**: A body of water formed where **freshwater** from rivers and streams flows into the ocean, mixing with the **seawater**.
33. **Salt Marsh**: Coastal wetlands that are flooded and drained by salt water brought in by the tides
34. **Lakes**: Body of freshwater surrounded by land, plants and algae usually grow along the edges where the water is shallow.
35. **Ponds**: Body of freshwater surrounded by land, shallower than a lake, plants and algae usually grow along the edges where the water is shallow.
36. **Oceans**: Large bodies of saltwater divided by continents. Oceans have many types of smaller ecosystems depending on the conditions of that part of the ocean (sunlight, temperature, depth, salinity).
37. **Salinity**: The level of salt in water.
38. **Algae**: Rootless plants that grow in bodies of water. They are organisms, or living things that are found all over the world. Algae are very important because they make much of Earth's oxygen.
39. **Plankton**: Organisms that float on the water in aquatic ecosystems.