

Mr. Alexander
Science 6

Ecology Unit Vocabulary

abiotic factor --

a non-living physical or chemical attribute of a system, for example light, temperature, wind patterns, rocks, soil, pH, pressure, etc.

biotic factor -

created by a living thing or any living component within an environment in which the action of the organism affects the life of another organism, for example a predator consuming its prey

biodiversity --

The diversity of plant and animal life in a particular habitat (or in the world as a whole); a high level of biodiversity is desirable.

carnivore --

An animal or plant (particularly insect- and invertebrate-eating plants) that requires a staple diet consisting mainly or exclusively of animal tissue through predation or scavenging.

consumer --

An organism that generally obtains food by feeding on other organisms or organic matter due to lack of the ability to manufacture own food from inorganic sources

decomposers --

(mainly bacteria and fungi) consume dead plants and animals and break down organic materials and returning nutrients to the environment (mostly soil)

ecosystem --

A system that includes all living organisms (biotic factors) in an area as well as its physical environment (abiotic factors) functioning together as a unit.

food chain --

A feeding hierarchy in which organisms in an ecosystem are grouped into trophic (nutritional) levels and are shown in a succession to represent the flow of food energy and the feeding relationships between them.

food web --

A graphical model showing the interconnecting food chains in an ecological community

herbivore --

Any animal that feeds chiefly on grass and other plants.

interdependence --

the quality or condition of being mutually reliant on each other

omnivore --

An omnivore is an animal that eats both plants and animals for their main food.

organism --

a form of life considered as an entity; an animal, plant, or fungus

photosynthesis --

Plants absorb sunlight and turn that energy into food; the process is known as photosynthesis.

population –

Population means the number of people, animals or organisms living in a geographic area.

predator --

An organism that preys upon other organisms.

prey –

the animal being hunted; The organisms being eaten.

producer --

An organism capable of producing complex organic compounds from simple inorganic molecules through the process of photosynthesis (using light energy) or through chemosynthesis (using chemical energy).