

VOCABULARY

Acid rain - acid precipitation that falls as rain. Is usually the result of human activities that expel various acid forming gases into the air that mix with the water vapor in the atmosphere to form an acid.

Adapt - something that is changed or changes so well as to become suitable to a new or special use or situation.

Biosphere - that part of the earth that is inhabited by life. Includes organisms found deep in the soil and those, which are in the atmosphere. The total of all the various ecosystems on the earth equal the biosphere.

Carrier - a medical term referring to a person or animal that at least has temporary immunity to a disease pathogen that it transmits directly or indirectly to others. In the case of polio, the common housefly was thought to carry the poliovirus from one person to another.

DDT - a colorless contact insecticide that is toxic to human and animals when swallowed or absorbed through the skin. It is no longer legal to use it in the United States because it is very harmful to humans and to wildlife; however, it is still legal to export DDT to other countries

Ecological niche - that part of an ecosystem that is occupied by a single type of organism.

Ecosystem - a biological method of grouping organisms and their non-biotic environment to study their interactions with each other. An ecosystem can be very large or very small depending upon the size of the area.

Evolution - all the changes in species that have transformed life on earth from its earliest beginnings to the present.

Exponentially - in mathematics it means the act of raising a quantity to a power. As it is used in the text it simply means that the time necessary for a population to double shortens proportionally.

Extinct - no longer existing or living.

Food chain - a succession of organisms in an ecosystem that constitute a feeding chain in which food energy is transferred from one organism to another. Producers, those organisms that create energy by photosynthesis, are eaten by first order consumers who are subsequently preyed upon by second order consumers, etc. ♦

Food web - a complex system of several food chains in which an organism can find its self in several different roles.

Immune - an inherited, acquired, or induced resistance to a specific pathogen.

Polio - (poliomyelitis) an infectious viral disease occurring mainly in children and in its acute forms attacks the central nervous system and produces paralysis.

Species - a particular kind of organism that interbreeds naturally, produces fertile offspring, and is genetically similar.

Strain - A group of organisms of the same species having distinctive characteristics but not usually considered a separate breed or variety.

Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) - a waste gas produced by industry that when mixed with water in the atmosphere falls to earth as sulfuric acid and can lower the pH of the land or water.