
Glossary

Acid rain: Rain that is contaminated with pollutants such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide gases.

Adapt: To change in order to fit a new situation or use.

Analyze: To study something by breaking it down into simpler parts.

Aquarium: A water-filled glass or plastic container where organisms can live and be observed.

Aquatic: Living in water.

Bud: A growth on the tip or side of a plant that develops into a flower or leaf.

Cercus (plural, cerci): A spiny organ that sticks out of the rear end of the cricket and other insects.

Classify: To group things together because they share one or more properties.

Conclusion: A decision that is based on observation or on a study of data.

Constant: A condition that is not changed in a scientific experiment.

Consumer: An organism that feeds on other organisms or organic matter because it cannot make its own food.

Controlled experiment: A scientific investigation in which one variable is changed and all the others are kept the same, or constant.

Cotyledon: The first leaves of a new plant. The cotyledon stores food until the new plant can begin to make its own food through the process of photosynthesis. Also called seed leaf.

Data: Information, such as that gathered during an experiment.

Disrupt: To upset the development, movement, or organization of someone or some thing.

Ecology: The science concerned with the relationships among living things and their environment.

Ecosystem: A community that includes all the living and nonliving things found in a certain area.

Embryo: The first stage in the development of an organism. An embryo may be an animal growing in an egg or in its mother's body. The word also refers to the part of the seed that grows into a plant.

Entomologist: A scientist who studies insect life.

Environment: Everything that surrounds an organism and influences it.

Evidence: Something that offers proof.

Exoskeleton: A hard supporting or protective structure on the outside of the body of an insect or other animal.

Experiment: A procedure that is carried out to investigate a scientific question.

Fossil fuel: Fuels formed from plant or animal remains. Coal, gas, and oil are examples.

Froned: The compound leaf of certain plants, such as fern and duckweed.

Fry: Young fish.

Gastropods: A class of animals with soft bodies and a muscular foot, which is used for moving. Many gastropods, such as snails, also have a shell.

Germination: The process by which seeds swell up and begin to sprout and develop roots.

Gravid spot: Black spot on the side of the body of a female fish that is carrying offspring within its body.

Habitat: A place that is natural for an organism to live.

Hypothesis: A prediction about how something works or how two variables are related.

Invent: To think up or create something for the first time.

Isopod: A small animal with a segmented thorax. Each part of the thorax has its own pair of legs. Isopods are crustaceans. They include pillbugs, as well as certain sea animals such as shrimp and lobsters.

Larva (plural, larvae): A stage in the life cycle of some organisms. A caterpillar is a larva.

Lateral line: A dark line, running the length of a fish, that senses pressure in the water.

Live-bearer: An animal that gives birth to live, fully formed offspring.

Mantle: A structure that lines the shell of shell-bearing animals. The mantle has glands that produce the material from which new shell is made.

Nymph: A very young insect.

Opinion: An expression of how one thinks or feels about something. An opinion is based on personal views, not necessarily on facts.

Organism: A living thing.

Ovipositor: An organ that the female cricket uses to put her eggs in the ground.

Pattern: A repeating arrangement of shapes, colors, numbers, or other things.

Photosynthesis: The process by which green plants and blue-green algae, in the presence of light, make food out of carbon dioxide and water.

Pollutant: Anything that spreads harmful or unpleasant substances into the air, water, or ground.

Procedure: A set of steps that explains how to do something.

Producer: An organism that can make its own food through the process of photosynthesis.

Radula: A tongue-like organ that has tiny teeth that break down an animal's food into bits. A snail has a radula.

Respiration: The processes by which an organism takes in and processes oxygen and releases carbon dioxide.

Scavenger: An organism that eats dead or decaying organic matter. Scavengers are also known as decomposers.

Sediment: Small pieces of rock, plant, and animal material that are carried by water, wind, or ice.

Stable: Steady, balanced.

System: A number of objects or units that move or work together as a whole.

Tentacle: A long, thin organ that an animal uses for feeling, feeding, or grasping.

Terrarium: A closed glass or plastic container where organisms can live and be observed.

Terrestrial: Of or related to the land.

Thorax: The middle segment of an insect.

Trade-off: The act of giving up one thing in order to get another.

Variable: An element in an experiment that can be changed.

Water pollution: Condition that exists when harmful materials have entered the water and made it harmful to organisms.

Watershed: An area of land that is drained by a stream or river and its branches.

Weight: A measurement of the force of gravity on an object.