

UNIT 4 ECOLOGY VOCABULARY

<u>Term/Concept</u>	<u>Explain it</u>
<i>Apex Predator</i>	aka... the alpha predator, aka ... the top dawg. This is a predator at the top of the food chain that has NO, I say again.... NO natural predators.
<i>Biomass</i>	The total sum off all matter in an area that comes from living organisms (biotic factors) this includes things that are still alive or the remains of something that was once living, also poo (feces) and other biotic factors.
<i>Biotic Factor</i> vs <i>Abiotic Factor</i>	Biotic = from living things (are or come from plants, animals, fungi, protist and/or bacteria), Abiotic – NOT from living things (air, water, elements, minerals, rocks, etc...)
<i>Carnivore</i>	“Meat Eater”
<i>Climax Community</i>	The final stage of an ecosystem. Like there are no more native species that can succeed (take over) One Local Example is a hardwood tree forest. Once all the grasses, shrubs, small trees and pine tress have been succeeded (replaced) by hardwood oak trees and such then this a climax community or mature forest.
<i>Commensalism</i>	(+, 0) biological interaction in which members of one species gain benefits while those of the other species neither benefit nor are harmed.
<i>Consumer</i>	An organism that acquires (gets) the energy it needs by eating other organisms.
<i>Density Dependent</i> vs. <i>Density Independent</i>	Factors that can impact a population based on how many organisms live there such as the availability of food, parasitism, predation, disease, and migration are called density dependent. Other factors that effect populations regardless of the size of the population such as floods, temperature, hurricanes, gas levels in atmosphere etc... are called density independent factors.
<i>Herbivore</i>	“Plant Eater”
<i>Keystone Species</i>	A species that has a very large impact on its ecosystem and other species depend on for survival. A keystone species may create habitats or prevent overpopulation. They serve a niche that other organisms could not fill if the keystone species were to disappear.
<i>Mutualism</i>	(+, +) biological interaction in which members of one species gain benefits while those of the other species also benefit. Soo it is a good thing for both species.
<i>Niche</i>	A species ecological role in the ecosystem. Keystone species is a niche, eating poo or dung like the dung beetle is a niche, producing shelter and photosynthesis is a niche of trees.
<i>Omnivore</i>	“Eats Plants and Animals”
<i>Parasitism</i>	(+, -) biological interaction in which members of one species gain benefits while those of the other species are Negatively impacted or Harmed. Soo it is a GOOD thing for one species but BAD for the other species.
<i>Pioneer Species</i>	A species that is the FIRST to colonize an area. Typically grow on bare rock or bare soil. Pioneer species for primary succession are lichens and mosses. Pioneer species for secondary succession are grasses and small plants.
<i>Producer</i>	Use sunlight to create sugar (food) in a process called photosynthesis.
<i>Succession</i>	A series of steps in which an ecosystems starts from scratch and works its way up to a mature forest or a climax community.
<i>Primary vs Secondary Succession</i>	Primary succession starts off with NO soil and only bare rock. Secondary succession starts off with some soil already present.
<i>Trophic Level</i>	The position an organism occupies in the food web or energy pyramid.