

Write one important fact from each paragraph in this space.

Science Shorts -7

What Is An Ecosystem?

Every living thing on Earth is part of an ecosystem. An ecosystem is a community of plants and animals in an area. One example of an ecosystem is a forest. Another example of an ecosystem is a stream. There are millions of ecosystems of Earth.

Every ecosystem has things that are nonliving or abiotic. Abiotic is a word that means without life. Two abiotic factors in a forest ecosystem are soil and air. Two abiotic factors in a stream ecosystem are rocks and water. Other nonliving things in ecosystems are rain and sunlight. Nonliving things are important to the living plants and animals in the ecosystem.

Every ecosystem has living things in it. The living things in an ecosystem are called biotic factors. For example, a forest ecosystem can have bears, foxes, rabbits and many other animals. The trees and other plants are also living parts of a forest ecosystem. A stream ecosystem can have fish, frogs, insects and many other animals. The plants that grow in the stream are biotic factors of the stream ecosystem.

An ecosystem can be large or small. An ocean is a very large ecosystem. It is made up of the biotic animals and plants and the abiotic water. An old log on the ground is a very small ecosystem. It is made up of the nonliving log and the living things such as insects that make the log their home.

Earth has many different ecosystems. A forest ecosystem is different from a desert ecosystem. Typically forests get more rainfall than deserts so different plants and animals live in each one. A mountain ecosystem is different from a lake ecosystem. But all ecosystems are the same in one important way. Every ecosystem gives the living things what they need to live. Ecosystems are the homes for all living things on Earth.

A biome is a group of ecosystems with similar climate and organisms. Classifying ecosystems into biomes helps ecologists describe the world. There are six major land biomes and two major water biomes. The land biomes are the rain forest, desert, grassland, deciduous forest, boreal forest and tundra. The water biomes are the freshwater and the saltwater biomes. Each of these biomes is made up of many different ecosystems.

A.

Write True if the sentence is true. Write False if the sentence is false.

- _____ 1. An ecosystem is a community of plants and animals in an area.
- _____ 2. Every ecosystem includes both living and nonliving things.
- _____ 3. All ecosystems are equal in size.
- _____ 4. There are many different kinds of ecosystems.

B.

Look at the picture of the forest ecosystem. Write the living and nonliving things shown in the picture.

Living Things in a Forest Ecosystem

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____



Nonliving Things in a Forest Ecosystem

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

C.

Write one or more sentences to answer the questions.

Could a robin from a forest ecosystem live in a desert ecosystem? Why or why not?
