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| **Keyword** | **Definition** |
| **Adaptations** | Features that help an organism survive in its environment |
| **Biodegradable** | Substances that can be broken down by microorganisms such as fungi and bacteria. Most paper and wood items are biodegradable, but most plastics are not |
| **Biodiversity** | The great variety of living things, both within a species and between different species |
| **Carbon cycle** | The cycling of the element carbon in the environment between the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere. It exists in different compounds but in the atmosphere it is mainly present as carbon dioxide |
| **Combustion** | The process of burning a substance that reacts with oxygen to produce heat and light |
| **Competition** | Different organisms that require the same resources, such as water, food, light or space, must compete for the resource |
| **Consumers** | Organisms that eat others in a food chain. This is all of the organisms in the food chain except the producer. |
| **Decomposer bacteria** | Bacteria that break down the proteins in dead organisms |
| **Decomposers** | Organisms that feed on dead organisms. Decomposers breakdown the complex organic chemicals in their bodies, releasing nutrients back into the ecosystem to be used by other living organisms |
| **Decomposition** | Breakdown of organic matter (dead organisms) |
| **Denitrification** | Removal of nitrogen from soil. |
| **Denitrifying bacteria** | Bacteria that break down nitrates in the soil, releasing nitrogen into the air |
| **Detritivores** | Organisms that feed on dead organisms and waste. Woodlice, earthworms and millipedes are examples of detritivores |
| **Diseases** | A condition that impairs normal functioning of an organisms body, usually associated with particular signs and symptoms. It may be caused by an infection or the dysfunction of internal organs |
| **Evolution** | The process by which species gradually change over time. Evolution can produce new species |
| **Extinct** | A species is extinct when all the members of the species have died out |
| **Fertile** | An organism that can produce offspring |
| **Food Web** | A series of linked food chains showing what eats what in a habitat |
| **Fossils** | The stony remains of an animal or plant that lived millions of years ago, or an imprint of its mark, for example, a footprint in a surface |
| **Habitat** | The place where an organism lives |
| **Infertile** | An organism that cannot produce offspring |
| **Interdependence** | How living organisms depend on each other in a habitat. A food web shows interdependence |
| **Lichens** | Organism consisting of a fungus growing with a simple photosynthetic organism called an alga. Lichens grow very slowly and are often found growing on walls and roofs |
| **Mayfly larvae** | Mayflies spend most of their lives (up to three years) as mayfly larvae (also called mayfly nymphs). They live and feed in aquatic environments. |
| **Monoculture** | The continuous growing of one type of crop |
| **Mutation** | A change of the DNA of an organism. It alters a gene and may change the organisms characteristics |
| **Natural selection** | When certain individuals are better suited to their environment they are more likely to survive and breed, passing on their features to the next generation |
| **Nitrogen Cycle** | The continual cycling of nitrogen, which is one of the elements essential for life. By being converted to different chemical forms, nitrogen is able to pass between the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere |
| **Nitrogen fixation** | When the nitrogen in the air is converted into nitrates in the soil by bacteria |
| **Nitrogen-fixing bacteria** | Bacteria found in the soil and in swellings (nodules) on the roots of some plants (legumes), such as clover and peas. These bacteria take in nitrogen gas and make nitrates, which the plant can absorb to make proteins |
| **Photosynthesis** | The process in green plants that uses energy from sunlight to convert carbon dioxide and water into glucose and oxygen |
| **Phytoplankton** | Single-celled organisms found in the ocean. They carry out photosynthesis |
| **Populations** | A group of animals or plants of the same species living in the same area |
| **Predator** | An animal that kills another animal (its prey) for food |
| **Producers** | Organisms found at the start of a food chain. Producers are autotrophs, able to make their own food |
| **Reproductive isolation** | Two populations are reproductively isolated if they are unable to breed with each other |
| **Respiration** | A series of chemical reactions in cells that release energy for the cell to use |
| **Selective breeding** | Choosing parent organisms with certain characteristics and mating them to try to produce offspring that have these characteristics |
| **Species** | A group of organisms that can breed to produce fertile offspring |
| **Sustainability** | Using resources and the environment to meet the needs of today without damaging the Earth or reducing the resources for people in the future |
| **Variation** | Differences between living organisms. This could be differences between species. There are also differences between members of a population form the same species |