



ECOSYSTEM SCAVENGER HUNT



EXPLORE THE ECOSYSTEM AROUND WHERE YOU LIVE TO DISCOVER PRODUCERS, CONSUMERS, AND DECOMPOSERS

BACKGROUND INFO:



National Geographic has a wonderful definition for an ecosystem: "An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscape, work together to form a bubble of life. Ecosystems contain biotic or living, parts, as well as abiotic factors, or non-living parts. Biotic factors include plants, animals, and other organisms. Abiotic factors include rocks, temperature, and water."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Take a screenshot of the second page of this activity or print it out.
2. Go for a walk.
3. Take time to explore. Check off the items on the list as you find them.
4. Part of understanding an ecosystem is respecting it - the plants and animals in our urban and suburban ecosystems need the materials we will be finding, so it is important to observe and discover, but to leave things where you find them.
5. Want to go one step further? Take fun photos of your discoveries. Make a photo collage with them and share it! #worldwater
6. Discuss the "Questions to Consider"
7. Complete the participation form at worldwater.org to be entered for a chance to win prizes!





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PRODUCERS

- A tree so big you cannot wrap your arms around the trunk
- A tree that is small enough that you can wrap your hand around the trunk
- 3 different colors of leaves or flowers
- 3 different kinds of "grass"
- 3 different kinds of seeds

CONSUMERS (OR SIGNS OF CONSUMERS)



- An insect (insects have 6 legs)
- A spider (spiders have 8 legs)
- A bug with more than 8 legs
- A bird's nest
- An animal footprint
- A mammal
- A place where a bird could get a drink
- A place where a bug could get a drink

DECOMPOSERS

- A mushroom
- A slug
- A tree stump (look closely - what's inside?)
- A worm

ABIOTIC FACTORS:

- Feel the wind
- Soil (What does it feel like? What does it smell like?)
- Two different kinds of rocks
- Water in 3 places

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What is the most interesting thing you found?
- What surprised you during about your exploration?
- Where do the producers, consumers, and decomposers find water in this ecosystem?
- How do you think this ecosystem would be different with no water?

