

# A LOCAL ECOSYSTEM

## GLOSSARY

- Abiotic** The non-living features of an ecosystem, i.e. temperatures, humidity, buoyancy, soil type, topography
- Abundance** is the number of organisms in a population, expressed as either total population or population density
- Adaption** can be structural, behavioural or a physiological characteristics of an organism that helps it survive or reproduce
- Aerobic** means related to the presence of oxygen
- Algae** are simple plants, usually aquatic, from single cells to larger plants like kelp without vascular tissue
- Allelopathy** is the production by a plant of chemicals that are released into the soil to assist with competition against other plants (often their own seedlings)
- Aquatic** means living or growing in water
- Autotroph** means an organism that produces its own food from simpler substances in the environment - a producer
- Bacteria** are the simplest group of non-green organisms with a basic cell structure
- Biochemical** means a chemical found in or associated with living things
- Biomass** is the total weight of the living components (producers, consumers, and decomposers) in an ecosystem at any moment
- Biotic** refers to the living components of the biosphere
- Capture-mark-Recapture** is the method of estimating the population size of a mobile animal by capturing some, marking them harmlessly, releasing them and then recapturing them later
- Carnivore** is a flesh-eating organism, for example, the Tasmanian Devil
- Chlorophyll** is the green pigment in plants associated with the capture of sunlight for use in photosynthesis
- Colonisation** means to move into and inhabit an area not previously occupied by that species
- Commensalism** describes the relationship between organisms that live in close association with only one species receiving the benefit, while the other species is neither harmed
- Community** means the combination and interconnected populations of an environment
- Competition** is the struggle among living things, between the same species and between others, that compete for a common resource such as food or space
- Consumer** is any organism that eats other organisms
- Contamination** means to make harmful or useless because of the exposure to or the addition of substances
- Decomposer** is an organism such as a bacterium or fungus that brings about the decay or breakdown of organic material into simpler substances
- Distribution** refers to the area(s) where a living organism occurs
- Environment** is all the factors that affect a living organism, abiotic and biotic
- Estimate** is an approximate calculation
- Fauna** are animals of a given area or period
- Flora** are plants of a given area or period
- Grassland** is a region in which the main vegetation is long-lived grasses
- Graze** means to feed on growing plants
- Habitat** is the environment where an organism lives and is characterised by its biotic and abiotic properties
- Herbivore** is an animal that feeds on plants
- Heterotroph** is an organism that relies on ingesting other organic material as a food source
- Host** is an organism upon which a parasite feeds
- Mitochondria** are cell organelles responsible for aerobic respiration and the release of energy
- Mutualism** is the relationship between organisms that live in close association and help each other
- Native Species** are those that occur naturally in a particular location