

TREE & FOREST Terms and Definitions

This sheet will help prepare your students for some of the words that will be brought up during the **Seeing the Forest AND the Trees (May the Forest Be with You)** presentation.

PERTAINING TO TREES

Coniferous/Conifers/Evergreens – Cone bearing trees; Trees with needle-like leaves; these trees generally do not lose their leaves in the fall. Examples: Pine, spruce, fir, cedar

Deciduous/Hardwoods – Trees that usually produce an easy to see seed (acorn, samara (a.k.a. “helicopter” from a maple)); Broad-leaved trees; these trees drop their leaves in the fall. Examples: Oak, maple, beech, aspen

Photosynthesis – The process that plants use to make energy (food) from sunlight.

Soil Compaction – What happens when the air spaces between soil particles are removed, limiting the movement and growth of a plant’s root system and the movement of water.

Roots – Lowermost part of the tree. Mostly unseen as it is buried underground however, some roots can be near the surface. Roots help to anchor or support the tree. Water and nutrients from the soil are taken up by the root system and distributed to the trunk and branches to help the tree grow.

Trunk – Produces wood which helps transport water and nutrients to the branches. Helps to keep the tree upright.

Crown – Twig and branch production occurs in the crown, which then produces the leaves. The leaves in turn use photosynthesis to make food for the tree.

PERTAINING TO THE FOREST

Canopy – The upper-most portion of a forest; where all the tops of the trees touch.

Succession – The transition from one type of vegetation to another. Example: an open field eventually converting into a forest.

Understory – The lower part of a forest, near to the ground. Young seedlings and saplings (as well as other plants: ferns, shrubs, wildflowers) grow in the understory.

Forest Floor – Similar to the understory but referring to the ground itself not necessarily regarding the plant life. “The forest floor was covered in pine needles.”

Regeneration – The new growth of young trees.

Harvest – The removal of trees for several reasons. Examples: Young tree regeneration, improve wildlife habitat, health of the forest, wood products, etc.

PERTAINING TO WILDLIFE

Secondary Cavity Nester – Animals that live in cavities created by another animal. Example: Saw-whet Owl, black-capped chickadee

Predator - In nature there are animals that hunt other animals. Example: Bobcat, hawks

Prey – In nature there are animals that are hunted. Example: Mice, squirrels

Habitat – A place where living things (birds, animals, plants, insects) live.