



Fourth Grade Science

Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems

Dear Families,

Here is what your child is learning in Fourth Grade, during the study of ecosystems and some specific ways you can help. Look for additional newsletters for upcoming units.

Ecosystems Unit

Students need to:

- Construct an argument with evidence that in a habitat, some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all
- Construct an argument that some animals form groups to survive
- Investigate a sample of organisms from an ecosystem
- Evaluate the effects that changes in the Chesapeake Bay have had on living and non-living things in the ecosystem

Key Vocabulary

Adaptation – internal and external features as well as behaviors that allow an organism to aid in survival, growth, behavior and reproduction in its environment.

Biodiversity- The variety of life in a habitat or ecosystem

Consumer - an organism that eats other living things to get energy; an organism that does not produce its own food

Ecosystem - the living and nonliving things in an area that interact with each other

Environment - all the living and nonliving things that surround an organism

Habitat - the location in which an organism lives

Herbivore - an animal that consumes only plants

Group Behavior - all of the actions and reactions of a group of living things

Keystone species- a species that plays a major role in maintaining the structure of an ecosystem

Migration - the movement of a group of organisms from one place to another, usually due to a change in seasons

Omnivore - an animal that eats plants as well as other animals

Organism - any individual living thing

Predator - an animal that hunts and eats another animal

Prey - an animal that is hunted and eaten by another animal

Producer - an organism that makes its own food; an organism that does not consume other plants or animals

Species - a group of organisms that share similar characteristics and can mate with each other to produce offspring

Survive - to continue living or existing: An organism survives until it dies; a species survives until it becomes extinct

Ways FAMILIES Can Help

- Use the Discovery Education links to find more information.
- List the living and non-living things observed within different ecosystems.
- Visit a zoo with your child and discuss how the animals have adapted to their environment.
- Go on a hike and see how many ecosystems you can find.
- Look for living things in your backyard and determine why those things are living there.