

Go on an Ecosystem Scavenger Hunt

Maria and Rachel Carson were both keen explorers of nature, spending a lot of Rachel's childhood together outside. The observation skills she learned during these years became the foundation of how she learned about ecosystems for the rest of her life.

One way to heighten your observation skills is to go on a nature walk with a list of things to find: leaves, tree cones, seashells, and so on. In this activity, the scavenger hunt steps up a notch with some of the things you've learned about ecosystems.

You'll Need

- Comfortable clothing
- Photocopy of the list of items to find
- Pencil
- Notebook (or other hard surface to lean on as you write)

Go for a walk in a park or other natural area—a forest, a beach, a meadow, along a river. Tick off as many of the items on the list as you can and make notes on your paper.

ECOSYSTEM SCAVENGER HUNT FORM

The ecosystem I'm exploring is _____. It is part of the _____ biome.

Three non-living (abiotic) parts of the ecosystem. What are they? _____

Three living (biotic) parts of the ecosystem. What are they? _____

An interaction between something biotic and something abiotic. What are the two things and what is the interaction between them? _____

A source of water for an organism in the ecosystem _____

An insect's home. What does it look like? Can you identify the insect that lives there? _____

Evidence of a decomposer. What is the evidence? Can you identify the decomposer from the evidence? _____

Evidence of a consumer. What is the evidence? Can you identify the consumer from the evidence? _____

A producer. What is it? _____

A primary consumer. What is it? _____

A secondary consumer. What is it? _____

A tertiary consumer that might live in or visit the ecosystem. What is it? _____

An example of erosion. What is it, and what do you think caused it? _____

What biotic and abiotic things might be affected by the erosion you found above? _____

Two plants with different adaptations. What are the plants, and what are their adaptations? _____

Two animals with different adaptations. What are the animals, and what are their adaptations? _____
