**Chapter 1 – Organisms and Their Environment Vocabulary Words**

**Ecology**: the study of interactions among organisms and between organisms and environment

**Ecologist**: someone who studies ecology - interactions within a natural environment

**Abiotic:** non-living parts of the environment (temperature, light, water, air, soil)

**Biotic**: living parts of an environment

**Climate**: average weather pattern of a region over a long period of time

**Biomes**: large regions that have the same temperature and amount of rain or snow (precipitation)

**Habitat**: food, water and shelter where an organism lives

**Ecosystem**: the organisms and abiotic parts of an environment, and how they affect each other

**Species**: group of organisms that can successfully mate and reproduce

**Population**: group of same species living together in one ecosystem

**Community**: all interacting populations that live in an area

**Sampling**: how ecologists estimate population sizes in an ecosystem

**Quadrat**: square that marks off a a specific area that ecologists sample from

**Niche**: space in which an organism lives - role an organism plays within its ecosystem

**Producers**: organisms that produce their own food - don't eat other organisms for food

**Consumers**: organism that consume producers or other consumers for food - all animals are consumers

**Herbivores**: plant eating animals

**Carnivores**: meat eating animals

**Omnivores**: animals that eat plants and other animals

**Scavengers**: organisms that eat decaying plants and animals

**Decomposers**: organisms that break down dead or waste materials

**Symbiosis**: biological relationship between 2 species that live closely together over time

**Symbiotic**: type of relationship between 2 species - parasitism, mutualism or commensalism

**Parasitism**: one partner benefits from symbiotic relationship, one partner is harmed

**Parasite**: benefits from parasitic relationship

**Host**: harmed by parasitic relationship

**Mutualism**: both partners benefit from symbiotic relationship

**Commensalism**: one partner in symbiotic relationship benefits, one partner does not lose or gain from relationship