

Lake Ecology Vocabulary

- Abiotic:** material lacking any biotic (once living) substances
- Adaptation:** special behavioral or physical characteristics of an animal that help it survive
- Biotic:** material composed of living or once alive components
- Consumer:** an organism that uses a producer for food; cannot make their own food
- Decomposer:** an organism that breaks down dead or decaying organisms and in doing so carries out the natural process of decomposition
- Detritus:** dead organic matter and the accompanying decomposers feeding upon it
- Food Web:** a network of feeding relationships by which energy and nutrients are passed on from one species of living organisms to another
- Invertebrate:** an animal lacking a backbone
- Macroinvertebrate:** invertebrates that are large enough to see without the aid of a microscope
- Producer:** an organism that creates its own food using the sun's energy
- Vertebrate:** an animal distinguished by the possession of a backbone or spinal column