

Be an Ecologist



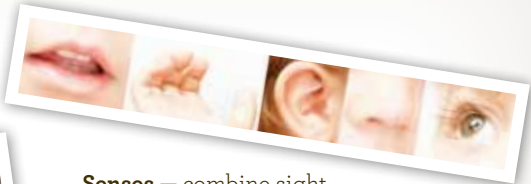
Ecology is the study of organisms and how they interact with their environment.

What might an ecologist do?

- Spend time outside studying both the living and non-living things in an ecosystem.
- Conduct experiments on soil and water.
- Look for ways that humans can protect the environment.



Tools of the Trade



Senses — combine sight, smell, sound and touch for the most important skill of the trade: observation



Measuring tape — to measure organisms such as trees



GPS technology — to track locations, populations and movement

Ecology in *NatureQuest*

Try these activities if you would like to be an ecologist.



Tree roots and plants help purify water, allowing organisms to thrive. Find 2 spots in the river, estuary or swamp with plants or tree roots. Could they be cleaning water?

Non-living things provide great habitats for many organisms. Find 3 different non-living things that would provide good habitat. Why would they be good habitats? What might live there?

Ecologists often measure the health of an ecosystem by the variety of species in an area, called biodiversity. Can you find a place where biodiversity is high?

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