

Photo courtesy of Yvette Ortega.

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Meet an Ecologist!

Yvette Ortega is an ecologist who asks questions about the impact of habitat conditions on various animals and their life histories. She wants to know how animals, such as fishers (a type of mammal), or songbirds are impacted by changes in their habitat.

Word Game

Use the words listed below and arrange them so that the boxes spell the word "ECOLOGY."
(Hint: There may be more than one way to solve the word game.)

PLANTS

ECOSYSTEM

NATURE

ORGANISM

BIOLOGY

POPULATION

SPECIES

NATURE

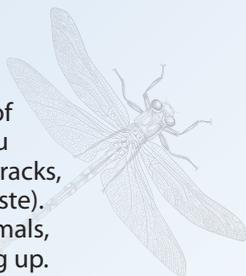
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Learn more about the natural world:
<http://www.naturalinquirer.org>

An ecologist studies how plants, animals, and nature's forces interact.

Be an Ecologist...

Whether big or small, animals (including humans) leave signs of activity all around the forest. You might see antlers, fur, feathers, tracks, leftover food, or scat (animal waste). Explore and find evidence of animals, but make sure not to pick anything up.



What was your most exciting discovery?

Start a game of animal charades!

Behavior is how animals interact with the environment and other animals. Animal behavior is really interesting. Pick your five favorite animals and act out their behaviors. See if anyone can guess which animal you are.

Like Ecology? Do More!

Animal behavior we see in nature often involves food. Use the information below to evaluate whether this natural area has enough food sources for animals. Check the box next to each when you have found the food source.



- Deer and many insects eat green plants such as *new leaves and grasses*.
- Hummingbirds and many insects need *nectar from flowers* to survive.
- Bears and some birds rely heavily on *fruit* in their diets.
- Birds also eat *insects* as a part of their diet.

Outdoor Tip:

Remember to wash your hands with soap and water after playing outside!

