



# Welcome to the Forest



by Ruth Owen

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Words shown in **bold** in the text are explained in the glossary.

# Welcome to the Forest

Who and what lives in a forest?

This **habitat** is home to trees, moss, and **fungi**.

The residents of this habitat include raccoons, birds, spiders, and other animals.



Every living thing in the forest gets what it needs to live from its habitat.



A forest is a type of ecosystem. An ecosystem includes all the living things in an area. It also includes non-living things such as soil, rocks, sunlight, and rain. Everything in an ecosystem has its own part to play.

So let's find out what happens in this natural neighborhood ...  
... welcome to the forest!

# Acorns, Shoots, Leaves, and Roots

It's spring in the forest, and fat buds are growing on the branches of trees.

When the buds burst open, leaves uncurl from inside.

If you visit a forest, you might not notice the soil. Without it, however, the trees and other plants could not live. Plants take in water and nutrients from soil through their roots.

Bud

These tree roots grow deep into the soil.

Oak tree leaves

Rainwater soaks into the soil.



An acorn is buried in the forest soil.  
Once the spring sunshine warms the soil, a **shoot** starts to grow.



Within a few weeks, the shoot grows into an oak tree seedling.

Once the oak tree is fully grown, it may live for hundreds of years!

In what ways do you think the forest trees are helpful to animals?