

# CHAPTER 6

In the last chapter, you learned about the rainfall, temperature, soil and living organisms of two biomes: grasslands and deciduous forests.

A deciduous forest is not the only kind of forest biome. You are going to look at two more kinds of forest biomes in this chapter:

Our first forest you will study this week is called...



*(This is a another tricky word. Try saying "con-if-er-us")*

Most of the water that the trees get in this biome comes from snow! This is because winters in the coniferous forest are long and cold with up to three feet of snow per year. The summers are short with small amounts of rainfall. During summer, the trees get plenty of water from all of the melting snow.

The soil in this biome is not very good for growing many kinds of plants. It is very thin and rocky.

## You might be thinking...

If the soil is not good for growing many kinds of plants...

...then why are there so many trees in this biome?

**Good question...** The kind of tree you usually find in this biome is known as a **conifer**.



The kind of tree you usually find in this biome is known as a **conifer**.

Conifers do not need a lot of water and nutrients to survive. Also, conifers do not have big leaves. Instead, they have short waxy needles! Conifer trees do not lose their leaves (needles), unlike a deciduous tree! This is very important because the

needles help make food for the tree! These needles also help to store water and nutrients the tree can use during the long, cold winters.

## But if a coniferous forest is cold most of the time, how do conifer trees get their water in the winter?

Remember that most of the trees in this biome get their water from melted snow. The needles are covered in a kind of wax. This wax helps to store water and nutrients in the needles for the tree to use later.

Conifers do not make any fruits (like apple trees and orange trees). Instead, they make cones. Have you ever heard of a pinecone before? A pinecone is the seed that will grow another conifer tree.

I would guess that most of you have seen a conifer tree before. Have you ever seen a Christmas tree? This type of tree is a conifer! Conifers are also known as **evergreens**. They get this name because their leaves (needles) stay green all year long!



We've spent a lot of time talking about the plants in this biome.

## What about the animals in these biomes?

The animals that live within this biome are used to the long cold winters. Foxes, chipmunks, moose and bear all live within the coniferous forest.

Most of these animals in this biome hibernate during the winters. Food is hard to find when there is so much snow on the ground! Before they hibernate, animals must eat as much food as they can so that they can store this food in their bodies during their long sleep during the winter months. Since the summers are so short, many animals move around a lot in search of food during this time to get ready for winter!

The next biome we will explore today is also a kind of forest:



## The tropical rain forest is different from the deciduous and coniferous forests in many ways!

- This biome is warm all year long with no winters!
- Up to twenty feet of rain falls during the year. This is much more than any other biome!
- Many plants found in this biome are used in medicines we use!

The tropical rain forest is filled with very large trees that cover most the land. The leaves of these trees are large and spread out over most of the land. There are so many trees in this biome, that these large leaves shade the ground below. So, the kinds of plants you find on the ground do not need a lot of sunlight. An example of this kind of plant is a fern.

You may be thinking that the soil must be full of nutrients for so many different plants, right?

**Wrong!**

*INSIDE THE MIND OF A MONKEY IN THE JUNGLE*



DON'T LOOK DOWN,  
JUST DON'T LOOK  
DOWN.

The soil in the tropical rain forest is very thin, much like the coniferous forest. However, the soil is not as rocky in the tropical rain forest.

Because there is so much rain in this biome, most of the nutrients are washed away! Plus, most of the nutrients that are in the soil are quickly taken in by the large trees. The smaller plants do not need a lot of nutrients to survive.

## **There are a huge number of animals that live in the tropical rain forest!**

The tropical rain forest is home to more kinds of plants and animals than any other biome! Since the weather is always warm, animals do not have to hibernate. And with so much food and water in this biome, animals do not have to move around very much. All of their resources are nearby!



Many of these organisms are used to living within the trees, like monkeys, birds and all kinds of insects. In fact, insects make up the largest number of animals within the tropical rain forest!

Many animals in this biome are brightly colored (scientists are not sure why!) and eat a lot of fruit to survive. Most monkeys, birds and insects can live off of fruits as their source of nutrients to stay alive!

If you are looking for the **largest** animals in this biome, you will look on the ground. Here you will find gorillas, hippos and tigers!

**Next week, you are going to look at two more biomes that are really different from what you have been exploring...**



The table below contains words and phrases that have been chopped in half. Find the pieces that fit together and write them in the answer area below.

fers	rain forest biome	tropical	coniferous
reens	coni	forest biome	everg

Answers:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

Match the words in the first column to the best available answer in the second column.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| _____ Coniferous forest biome    | 1) a biome that is always warm and has a lot of rainfall; this biome contains a huge amount of different kinds of plants and animals |
| _____ Conifers                   | 2) trees with short and waxy needles instead of leaves which make seeds that are called "cones" (like pinecones)                     |
| _____ Evergreens                 | 3) a biome that has long winters and is filled with trees known as conifers  |
| _____ Tropical rain forest biome | 4) plants with leaves that stay green throughout the winter  |

