Habitat

The area in which a plant or animal lives. A habitat includes conditions for plants to grow and reproduce and sufficient food, water, and shelter for animals to survive. In the Sabino Canyon, aquatic habitat is in, on, or above the creek bed where water dependent plants and animals are adapted to life in water. Desert habitat is the dry area away from the creek where plants and animals are adapted to survive in an area with little rainfall or access to water.

Arthropod

Small animals that have jointed legs, segmented bodies, and an exoskeleton (a hard outer skeleton). They are the most diverse of all animals, comprising 85% of all animal species. There are five orders of arthropods: insects, arachnids (spiders, scorpions, mites), crustaceans (shrimp, lobsters, crayfish), diplopoda (millipedes), and chilopoda (centipedes). They are classified by their different structures and characteristics. Arachnids have 2 body parts (cephalothorax and abdomen), 8 legs, and no wings. Insects have 3 body parts (head, thorax, abdomen), 6 legs, and 1 or 2 pair of wings in most adults.

Metamorphosis

The process of change from an immature form to an adult form in distinct stages. The life cycles of various insects differ. Incomplete metamorphosis is a three-stage change in insects (egg, nymph, adult) found in dragonflies and mesquite bugs. Complete metamorphosis is a four-stage change in insects (egg, larva, pupa, adult) found in mosquitoes and butterflies. A cocoon is a protective case spun by the larva of a moth or other insect to cover the pupa. A chrysalis is an insect pupa, especially of a butterfly, that is covered by a hard outer case.

Food Chain

The transfer of energy from plants to animals that eat plants, then in turn, from the plant-eating animals to animals that eat other animals. Producers are green plants that make food from sunlight, air, water, and simple organic matter from the soil. Consumers are animals that eat plants or other animals for food. Predators are animals that kill and eat other animals. Prey are the animals that are eaten by other animals. Camouflage patterns and colors blend in with the surrounding environment to help animals hide.

Interdependency

The mutual reliance of members of an environment on each other. Humans are dependent on arthropods to sustain our environment. The consequences of natural and human activity can impact the environment in which we live. Pollinators (bees) move pollen to parts of a flower so the fruit and seeds can grow. Decomposers (termites) turn dead matter into material that can be used by producers. Soil Enhancers (ants) help improve soil so plants can grow better.