



The Morton Arboretum “Hands-on Habitats” Vocabulary List

To maximize the effectiveness of your “Hands-on Habitats” outreach program from The Morton Arboretum, please familiarize your students with the following vocabulary words. This will be most effective just before the program.

Adaptation – the slow process of change in the physical or behavioral traits of a plant or animal due to some change in its environment

Camouflage – color, tones, patterns, shapes or behavior that enable an organism to blend in with its surroundings

Carnivore – an animal that eats other animals for food

Ecosystem – a community of living (biotic) organisms and non-living (abiotic) environmental factors working together as a unit

Habitat – an area that provides an animal or plant with adequate food, water, shelter and living space in a suitable arrangement

Herbivore – an animal that eats only plants for food

Nocturnal – active during the night

Omnivore – an animal that eats both plants and animals as food

Predator – an animal that hunts other animals for food

Prey – an animal (usually small) that might be hunted by a predator

Vertebrate – an animal with a backbone or spine