

RIVER VENTURE

Carrick Creek/Table Rock Glossary

abrasion: the process of scraping or wearing something away

abundant: having large amounts of something

accumulation: the process of gathering something over time

acidic: describes substances that reacts with some metals to give off a gas and tastes sour with sticky texture

adaptation: the ability for an organism to change to its environment to better survive and reproduce

adversely: acting in an opposite way

agriculture: the science or practice of farming

algae: a simple, nonflowering, and typically aquatic plant

alkali: a basic salt that contains earth-like materials

alumina: a white solid aluminum oxide

aluminum: common metal element with the symbol Al

amphibians: animals that live both on land and in water; have moist skins and no scales; most lay eggs in water, and the young breathe with gills before developing lungs and breathing air as adults

amphibole: any of a group of complex silicate minerals with like crystal structures that contain calcium, sodium, magnesium, aluminum, or iron ions or a combination of them

amphibolite: dark-colored metamorphic rock containing lots of iron-rich amphibole

anglers: one who fishes with a hook

angular: forming an angle

Appalachian Mountains: mountain system of eastern North America from Labrador and New Brunswick in Canada southwest to northern Alabama

appraised: to set a value on (from Merriam-Webster)

aquatic: fresh- or salt- water-based

aquatic ecosystems: water-based ecosystems and may be fresh water (lakes and ponds) or saltwater (oceans, estuaries and saltwater marshes)

aquifer: underground source used to pump water for growing plants

arboreal: refers to organisms that live in trees

architecturally: in a way that relates to the design and construction of buildings

asphalt: a mixture of sand and gravel

asthenosphere: the top portion of the mantle

atmosphere: a layer of gases that surrounds the Earth that supports life

atoms: small particles that make up all matter

bacteria: one-celled organisms found almost everywhere that can be both helpful and harmful

baritone: second lowest in musical pitch

barium: a silver-white element of the alkaline earth metal group with atomic number 56

basalt: igneous rock that has a uniform color with few visible crystal grains

batholiths: a type of igneous rock that forms when magma rises into the earth's crust, but does not erupt onto the surface

bed load: particles in a flowing fluid that are transported along the stream bed

bedrock: base of the soil horizon when weathered creates the sand, silt, and clay portion of soil

behavior: a response to a change in the environment

bewitched: to have casted a spell over

bicarbonates: acid carbonates

biodiverse: the variety of organisms at all levels in an ecosystem

biodiversity: the variety of organisms at all levels in an ecosystem

biological: of or related to biology

biology: a branch of science that deals with living organisms

biomechanical: of or related to the study of the motion and forces of biology

biotite: the black variety of mica

bird banding: when a tag is attached to a bird's leg to monitor its movement, migration, and behavior for research

birds: animals that are warm-blooded, breathe with lungs, lay eggs, have feathers, and have a beak, two wings, and two feet

blight: a plant disease

Blue Ridge Mountains: the eastern range of the Appalachian Mountains extending from South Mountain, southern Pennsylvania, into northern Georgia

bough: main branch of a tree

boulder: a large rock

bounty: yield especially of a crop

brood: the young of an animal

calcium carbonate: scientific term for chalk

camouflage: a color or pattern that allows an animal to blend into its environment and protects it from being seen by its enemies or allows it to sneak up more easily on its food

canopy: the top layer of the forest

canyon: A deep valley with very steep sides; often carved from the Earth by a river

carbohydrate: molecules composed of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen

carbon dioxide: gas produced by animals that plants need in order to make food

carbon dioxide-oxygen cycle: a process by which carbon is cycled through the atmosphere, land, water, and organisms

carbon monoxide: a colorless odorless very toxic gas

Carolina Chickadee: a chickadee of the southeastern U.S.

Carolina Gold Rush: started in 1799 when a 12-year-old boy discovered a fourteen-pound nugget of gold in a North Carolina creekbed then eager miners explored mountain streambeds and surface quartz veins for the precious metal

carrion: the decaying flesh of dead animals

cascading: to fall, pour, or rush in

cell: the most basic unit of any living organism

cellulose: a protective framework for the cell

channels: the places where stream systems form as water flows and collects

chemical weathering: a change in the chemical composition of the rock

chemistry: a science that deals with the composition, structure, and properties of substances

Chestnut-sided Warbler: a common warbler of eastern North America

chrysalis: the hardened outer protective layer of a pupa

clay: soil that has very small grains, much smaller than sand or silt, and holds water easily

cleavage: the way a mineral breaks

cleavage planes: a flat surface among which a mineral breaks

climate: the range of an area's typical weather conditions and the extent to which those conditions vary over long periods of time

Coastal Plain: a large, relatively flat region of southern South Carolina characterized by rivers, swamps, agriculture, and pine forests; the area between the Coastal Zone and the Sandhills

cocoon: an envelope, often largely of silk, which an insect larva forms about itself and in which it passes the pupa stage

co-evolution: when two or more species living close to each other change in response to each other

coloration: the arrangement of colors on an organism

commodity: something useful or valuable

compound: substances composed of two or more elements

condensation: the water droplets that form during the change in state from a gas to a liquid

confluence: a coming or flowing together, meeting, or gathering at one point

conifers: types of trees and shrubs such as pine trees and fir trees

conservation: the wise use of natural resources

contaminant: something that soils, stains, corrupts, or infects by contact

continental crust: Earth's outermost layer made up of granite

continental divide: a boundary that separates a continent's river systems

converging: to come together

co-parenting behavior: when both parents take care of their offspring by finding food and feeding them

corrosion: the wearing away due to chemical reactions

creek: water from streams that flows downward and meets with other water flows, gaining enough volume and eventually flow to ponds, lakes, or the ocean

creekbed: bottom of the creek

creep: the process of slow downhill movement of particles due to gravity

crevice: a narrow opening, especially in a rock or wall

crust: Earth's outermost layer that is the least dense of all the layers

crystal: grainy or glassy particles found in rocks and minerals

cultivation: the act or process of preparing the soil for the raising of crops

cyprinella: a type of fish that contains carps and minnows

DDT: an odorless, colorless compound that is used to kill insects

deciduous forests: forests made up of trees that lose their leaves in the winter when it is cold and often dry

decimation: the act of causing great destruction or harm to

decompose: to break down dead plants and animals

decomposition: the breaking down of dead plants and animals

deforestation: the cutting down of trees by excessive logging

delta: the end of a river where material is deposited by the water

deposition: the process in which Earth materials are eroded and put in a new location

deposits: the earth materials that have been eroded and put in a new location

detrimental: obviously harmful

differentiate: to recognize the difference between two things

diffuses: to move from one area with a high amount of something to an area with a lower amount

dissolved load: the portion of a stream's total sediment load that is carried

dissolved oxygen: the amount of oxygen that is present in water

diverging: to move or extend in different directions from a common point

dome mountains: mountains that form from the uplifting of a tectonic plate as magma deep within the earth rises and pushes up the crust without erupting

dormancy: a period of time when the growth or activity of a plant or seed stops due to changes in temperature or amount of water

down-cutting: to cut down as if by erosion

drainage basins: all of the land that water flows over or through before reaching a lake or river; watershed

drainage divide: the highland area that separates one watershed from another

drought: natural occurrence that creates a lack of water in an environment

earthquake: the natural occurrence when the surface of the ground shakes and rolls causing damage to the Earth's surface, like cracks and other openings, and damage to roads and buildings

ecological: the role of an organism in its environment including type of food it eats, how it obtains its food and how it interacts with other organisms

ecosystems: complex, interactive systems that include both the living components and physical components of the environment

ectothermic: describes animals, including fish, amphibians, and reptiles, which have an internal body temperature that changes with the temperature of the environment

electrochemical process: the process that creates a chemical change by adding electric current

elevation: height above a given level, especially sea level

emplaced: to have put into position

endothermic: describes animals, including birds and mammals, that maintain a nearly constant internal temperature and do not change with the temperature of the environment

enzymes: proteins that serve as catalysts (something causes a reaction) in a living organism

erosion: the process in which Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil are being carried away from their original location usually caused by water and wind

evaporation: a change in state from a liquid to a gas

evergreens: trees with thin, waxy needles that protect them from freezing and from losing water

exfoliation: the process in which rock layers are peeled away from a mountain

expansion: the act of increasing the volume of something

extracts: products prepared by withdrawing by a physical or chemical process

fault zones: areas where plate boundaries and tectonic forces result in the buildup of pressure

fault-block mountains: mountains that form when a normal fault uplifts a block of rock

fauna: the animals characteristic of a region, period, or special environment

feldspar: a common pink or white mineral that is dull or pearly and can scratch glass

fishery: a place for catching fish

fissures: a narrow opening or crack of considerable length and depth usually occurring from some breaking or parting

fledge: to leave the nest as a young bird

fledglings: a young bird that has just left the nest

flora: plant, bacterial, or fungal life characteristic of a region, period, or special environment

flood: a natural occurrence when a lot of water causes rivers and streams to overflow their banks over the surrounding land around them; usually caused by heavy rainfall in the area

floodplains: an area of low-lying ground next to a river

flowering plants: plants that make seeds within their flowers

fluctuation: to shift back and forth uncertainly

fold mountains: mountains that form when pressure from earth is applied slowly

foliage: plant leaves collectively

foliation: the process of creating layers or bands of minerals in metamorphic rocks

food chain: a model used when scientists describe the way energy is passed from one organism to another

food web: interconnected food chains

fracture: the act or process of breaking

fronds: the leaves or leaflike parts of a palm, fern, or similar plant

frost wedging: the process in which water freezes and thaws in the cracks of rocks causing ice to expand and contract

fungus (plural – fungi): mostly multicellular organisms that do not move to get food, but do need to absorb nutrients from other organisms (either living or dead)

gait: a person's manner of walking

gelatinous: resembling jelly

geography: the study of the physical features of the earth and its atmosphere and its human activity

geologic: describing landforms

geologists: people who study geology

geology: the study of the Earth, the materials of which it is made, the structure of those materials, and the processes acting upon them

girths: the measurements around the middle of something

glaciers: huge sheets of ice that cover land; found where temperatures are very cold

global warming: the increase in Earth's average surface temperature

glucose: a simple sugar produced by plants during photosynthesis that the plant uses for food

gneiss: common metamorphic rock often granite-like in composition/composition

gradient: an inclined part of a road or railway

granite: igneous rock containing crystals of different types of minerals

gravitropism: the process in which many species grow away from gravity

gravity: a pull that makes objects fall to the ground

groundwater: water that seeps into Earth's surface

gullies: a small valley or trench

gully erosion: erosion caused by the widening of gullies

habitat: the natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism

hatcheries: places for hatching eggs (as of fish)

hatchlings: young animals that have recently emerged from their eggs

headwaters: the source of a stream

hemlock: a common species of tree that has needles instead of leaves; often at relatively high elevations

herbaceous: of, relating to, or having the characteristics of an herb

hibernating: reducing body activity in order to conserve food stored in the body

hormone: protein that coordinates body

hornblende: an amphibole mineral that forms black or dark green bands

humidity: a measure of the amount of water vapor in the air

humus: dark, soft, and very crumbly soil that is made up of decayed parts of once-living organisms

hybrids: the offspring has one copy of the dominant trait and one copy of the recessive trait; also called heterozygous

hydrogen: common element with the symbol H with an atomic number

hydraulic: operated, moved, or affected by **means** of water

hydrochloride: a chemical substance that is a combination of a metal or base with hydrochloric acid

hydrochloric acid: a colorless, strong acid containing hydrogen and chlorine

hydroelectric power: a form of energy that utilizes the power of flowing water to generate electricity

hydrologic cycle: the process by which water changes states through the processes of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation between Earth's surface and atmosphere; also known as the water cycle

hydrolysis: the chemical breakdown of a compound due to reaction with water

ice erosion: the process in which ice scrapes materials off rocks and soil as it moves across their surfaces

igneous: rock that was once melted from magma or lava that has cooled and hardened; may be glassy or grainy with crystals of different types of minerals in them, such as granite; may be a uniform color with few visible crystal grains, such as basalt; have holes in them from gas bubbles that were trapped when lava cooled, such as scoria or pumice; and typically do not have layers

imperceptible: extremely slight

impermeable: not allowing fluid to pass through

incubating: sitting on (eggs) in order to keep them warm and bring them to hatching by a bird

infestation: the presence of an unusually large number of insects or animals in a place, typically so as to cause damage or disease

insecticides: substances used for killing insects

insulation: material that is used to stop the passage of electricity, heat, or sound from one conductor to another

intrusion: the act or process of thrusting oneself in without invitation, permission, or welcome

invasive: tending to spread especially in a quick manner

ion: compound created by the transfer of electrons (positively charged atomic particle)

iron: common metal and element with symbol Fe that turns reddish-brown when rusted due to chemical change

iron oxide: iron rust that turns reddish-brown when rusted due to chemical change

juvenile: undeveloped

landform: a natural feature of the earth's surface

landscape: all the visible features of an area of land

larva: the active immature form of an insect

lava: molten rock (magma) that reaches Earth's surface

lichens: simple slow-growing plants that typically form a low crusty or leaflike growth on rocks, walls, and trees

limestone: common sedimentary rock that is likely to change through the process of chemical weathering

lithosphere: the crust and top layer of Earth's mantle

loblolly pine: a pine tree of the southern U.S. that has very long slender needles and is an important source of timber

macro-invertebrates: any animal lacking a backbone and large enough to see without the aid of a microscope

magma: molten rock found beneath the Earth's surface

mammals: animals that grow fur or hair, usually give birth to live young, and can nurse their young with milk

mantle: the middle and thickest layer of Earth's crust that is dense, hot and semi-solid

marble: common metamorphic rock often used to make blocks for homes and office buildings

mass movement: when rocks and soils on a slope are no longer able to stay in place and begin to move down the hill or mountain side as a result of gravity

meandering: following a winding course

mechanical weathering: the physical processes that break down rocks at or near the surface of the earth

medicinal plants: plants used in the making of medicine

metamorphic: rocks that were once another type of rock deep inside Earth, but heat and pressure caused the minerals to change and form a new type of rock; could have been sedimentary rocks, igneous rocks, and even other metamorphic rocks; have minerals that line up in layers; some have bands or stripes of alternating light and dark mineral colors; sometimes the heat just changes the size of the mineral crystals; they do not always have layers or bands if formed mainly from heat

metamorphism: process that changes rocks that were once another type of rock deep inside Earth, but heat and pressure caused the mineral to change and form a new type of rock

metamorphosis: the process of changes (may be in appearance, color, shape, or growth of new structures) in form that some animals undergo in their life cycle

mica: a shiny mineral with a layered structure sometimes found in granite or other rocks, or as crystals

microcosm: a little world

microorganisms: living things that are too small to be seen without magnification (seen through a microscope or magnifying lens); can be single-celled or multi-celled

microscopic: describes something that is very small and only able to be seen with a microscope

migration: the movement of animals over the same route in the same season each year; allows animals to take advantage of resources (like food and water) in one location when they run low in another location

minerals: solid materials formed in nature that have never been alive and have properties by which they can be identified

molecules: a group of atoms bonded together

monolith: a large single upright block of stone

Mount St. Helens: volcanic mountain now 8,363 feet (2,549 meters) high in the Cascade Range of southwestern Washington

mountain: a place on Earth's surface where the land is much higher than the land that surrounds it

mucus: a slippery liquid released from the body of an animal in order to moisten or protect

mudslides: when rocks and soils on a slope are no longer able to stay in place and begin to move down the hill or mountain side very fast as a result of gravity

mutually beneficial relationship: a relationship in which two organisms benefit because the two organisms work closely together to help each other survive

nectar: a sweet liquid produced by flowers and collected by bees and other insects

Niagara Falls: waterfalls in the Niagara River (36 miles or 58 kilometers long) on the border between the U.S. (New York state) and Canada

nitrogen: common gas that comprises 78 percent of the Earth's atmosphere; atomic symbol - N

nitrogen cycle: process by which nitrogen gas is returned to the air in a form that plants can use

nocturnal: done, occurring, or active at night

nonvascular: plants that do not have a well-developed system for transporting water and food; therefore, do not have true roots, stems, or leaves; must obtain nutrients directly from the environment and distribute it from cell to cell throughout the plant; usually small in size and grow close to the ground

non-venomous: not poisonous

nymph: an immature form of an insect that does not change greatly as it grows

obsidian: hard, dark, glasslike igneous rock

oceanic crusts: outermost layer of the Earth's surface which underlies the ocean basin; thinner than continental crust; more dense than continental crust

offspring: an animal's young

omnivore: animals that eat both producers (animals that make their own food) and consumers (animals that cannot make their own food)

opaque: not able to be seen through

Ordovician era: occurred about 440 million years ago, involved massive glaciations that locked up much of the world's water as ice

organism: something that is alive

oxbow: a U-shaped bend in the course of a river or lake

oxidation: the reaction of oxygen in air or water that causes breakdown to occur in rocks, minerals, or metals; in the case of iron, oxidation causes the formation of rust

palisades: a line of bold cliffs

perching: to be resting on something usually high above the ground

Peregrine falcon: a type of falcon that is very swift

pheromones: a chemical substance produced and released into the environment by an animal

phosphorus: the chemical element of atomic number 15 that is a nonmetal

photosynthesis: the process by which plants make their own food, a simple sugar, for survival

phototropism: the process in which many species like plants and fungi will grow in response to light

phytoplankton: plankton (the small and microscopic organisms drifting or floating in the sea or fresh water) consisting of microscopic plants

plains: a flat region of lowlands that occurs at the bottoms of valleys

plagioclase: feldspar mineral that forms white bands

plate tectonics: the unifying theory that explains the past and current crustal movements at the Earth's surface

plutons: bodies of intrusive igneous rock

pollination: the spreading of pollen from flower to flower

pollution: anything that harms the natural environment

population: all members of one kind of organism that live in a particular area

potassium: a common chemical element with the symbol K and the atomic number 19 found often in nature

porous: having minute spaces or holes through which liquid or air may pass

precaution: care taken in advance

precipitation: the type of water falling from the clouds is rain, snow, sleet, or hail

predation: the preying of one animal on others

predators: animals that hunt and kill other animals for food

predecessors: the object or machine that came before it in a process of development

predominant: present as the strongest or main element

preserves: areas restricted for the protection of natural resources

prey: animals that are hunted and killed as food for other animals

primitive: original

proboscis: the nose of a mammal, especially when it is long and mobile

propagate: to pass along to offspring

prospector: a person who searches for mineral deposits

protected species: a species of animal or plant forbidden by law to harm or destroy

protein: molecules composed of chains of amino acids (molecules that are composed of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, and sometimes sulfur)

protozoa: a common group of single-celled organism

pungent: having a sharply strong taste or smell

pupa: an insect in its inactive immature form between larva and adult; also known as chrysalis

pupal: relating to the pupa

quartz: common glassy mineral that can scratch

radius: a straight line from the center to the circumference of a circle or sphere

rain erosion: the process in which Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil are being carried away from their original location by rain

receptacles: objects or spaces used to contain something

reclusive: avoiding the company of other people

recreation: activity done for enjoyment when one is not working

refuges: places that provides shelter or protection

regenerate: regrow to replace lost or injured body part

reptiles: animals that are ectothermic (cold-blooded), breathe with lungs, most lay eggs, although in some the eggs hatch inside the female, and have scales or plates

reservoirs: a large natural or artificial lake used as a source of water supply

resilience: the ability to recover quickly from difficulties

respiration: the process in which energy is released from food in most organisms

retractable: able to be drawn back or back in

rhododendron: a common type of shrub or tree with showy flowers and evergreen leaves

rill erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location by rills (small channels) being cut out by rainwater and then becoming gullies

river: water that flows toward the ocean and is a freshwater habitat

rock: hard, solid, non-living materials that make up Earth

rock cycle: the ongoing natural process that can change rocks from one form to another

rockslides: when rocks on a slope are no longer able to stay in place and begin to move down the hill or mountain side very fast as a result of gravity

runoff: water from precipitation that does not evaporate or enter the ground

salmon: a common type of fish that is found in North America

Sandhills: the hilly, central area of South Carolina that was a prehistoric beachfront (55-100 million years ago) and is marked by deposits of sand and sedimentary rock

sandstone: common sedimentary rock often used to make blocks for homes and office buildings

sapling: a young tree

saturated zone: a point at which the ground is completely soaked

schist: common metamorphic rock that has a tendency to split into layers

secrete: produce and discharge (a substance)

sediment load: composed of suspended and/or dissolved rock and mineral particles from a stream

sedimentary: rocks usually made up of pieces of rock that have been pressed and cemented together; can be recognized by being made of sediments of various sizes, including pebbles, sand grains, silt, and clay/mud; and may contain fossils

sediments: pieces of older rocks that have been broken down by the process of weathering

seepage: the slow escape of a liquid or gas through small holes

seizing: taking control of

shale: common sedimentary rock containing silt- and clay- size particles

sheet erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location by flowing sheets of rainwater

shiners: type of fish that is part of the minnow family found in creeks and small rivers

silicate: a salt that contains the element silicon and oxygen

silicon dioxide (SiO₂): a hard, unreactive, colorless compound which occurs as the mineral quartz

silt: soil that contains pieces that are smaller than sand and feels like powder

sinkholes: holes caused by erosion in rocks formed, depending on the rock present, the way water is moving, and the minerals in the water

slate: common metamorphic rock that splits easily into thin slabs

slope gradient: the action of particles (gradients) in higher elevations causes the water to move faster and much erosion takes place

sodium: salt

soil: the loose, top layer of Earth's surface made up of pieces of rock, sand, water, air, and pieces of dead organisms

soil horizons: the layers of soil

soil profile: all of the layers, or horizons, of the soil; consist of three layers - topsoil, subsoil, and parent material above bedrock

solution: a special type of mixture in which one substance is dissolved evenly into another substance

solvents: the substances in a solution that have the greatest amount

spawning: releasing or depositing eggs of a fish

splash erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location from the impact of raindrops

spore-bearing plants: non-flowering plants that produce spores instead of seeds

stamen: the male organ of a flower

sterile: unable to reproduce

stratum: a layer or a series of layers of rock in the ground

stream: small, flowing body of fresh water that flows into rivers

stream deposition: the process of Earth materials that have been eroded and put in a new location by a small, flowing body of fresh water that flows into rivers

stream erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location from the impact of streams

streambed: the bottom of a small, flowing body of fresh water that flows into rivers

subduction zone: the area in which the process of an oceanic crust converging with another oceanic crust, in which one of the two plates is denser (and usually older) and descends beneath the other

subsoil: second layer, or horizon, of the soil profile; contains humus and clay

substrates: underlying substances or layers

suspended load: fine sediments such as silt and clay that are usually deposited in still waters such as lakes, floodplains, and coastal areas

sustainable: able to be maintained at a certain rate or level

sympiotic: a relationship that exists between organisms of two different species that live together in direct contact

synchronous reproduction: the process by which all reproduce at one time to increase the odds of survival for offspring

tannin: a yellowish or brownish bitter-tasting organic substance present in some parts of trees used in leather production

tectonic plate: large sections of the Earth's crust and upper mantle that move in different directions and rates

tendrils: thin, stem-like parts of a climbing plant that holds on to walls or other plants for support

terrace: a flat area of ground

territorial: relating to the ownership of an area of land or sea

Teton Range: mountain range in northwestern Wyoming extending from Yellowstone National Park in the north to Grand Teton National Park in the south

terrain: a stretch of land

terrestrial environment: Land-based environments and ecosystems

thigmotropism: the ability for a plant to close its leaves when touched

tiered: having a series of rows or levels placed one above the other

tissues: a group of specialized cells that work together to perform a specific function

topography: the shape of the land

topsoil: top soil layer, or horizon; most suitable for plant growth when nutrient rich, containing a mixture of humus, clay, and minerals; most animals live on this layer

torrent: a strong and fast-moving stream of water or other liquid

transparency: the ability for a material to allow light to pass through so that objects behind can be distinctly seen

transpiration: the process in which plants store water inside of their cells then lose water through the leaves

traverses: to travel across or through

treaty: a formal agreement

tree cavities: hollow areas of trees

tree swallows: a common type of bird that nests in hollow areas of trees

trellis: a framework of light wooden or metal bars, chiefly used as a support for fruit trees or climbing plants

tributaries: bodies of waters that form when streams flow into each other

trout: common type of fish that are smaller than salmon and are restricted to cool fresh water

turbulent: moving unsteadily or violently

uncharted: something that is not recorded or plotted on a map

understory: a layer of vegetation beneath the main canopy of a forest

uplift: to raise the level of; a raised level

valleys: a lowland area between higher areas such as mountains

vapor: water's gaseous state

vascular system: a well-developed system used for transporting nutrients throughout an organism's body

veins: fingerlike bands in rocks in which hot mineral solutions may spread through small cracks in rock and harden

vegetation: plant life of an ecosystem

velocity: the speed and direction of an object

venomous: poisonous

vertebrates: animals with backbones

vocalizations: sounds or noises

volcanic eruptions: the natural occurrence when Earth material called lava comes out of the volcano, and flows down the side of the mountain (or is sent up into the air and lands nearby) where it hardens

warble: the soft song of a bird

water cycle: the process by which water changes states through the processes of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation between Earth's surface and atmosphere; also known as the hydrologic cycle

water table: the top of the point in which the ground is soaked

waterfalls: bodies of water, especially from a river or stream, dropping from a higher to a lower point

watershed: all of the land that water flows over or through before reaching a lake or river

wave erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location from the impact of waves

weathering: the process in which Earth materials like rocks are being broken apart; can change the shape of the Earth's surface by breaking down the rocks and soils that make up landforms

wetlands: an area of land that at least part of the year is under water

wind erosion: the process of Earth materials like rock, sand, and soil being carried away from their original location from the impact of moving air

witchcraft: the practice of magic and the use of spells

Wood Thrush: a type of bird that is found in eastern North America that is rusty brown on the head and back, has white underparts marked with large black spots, and is noted for its loud clear song

Yosemite National Park: famous national park located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California