

1- Herbivores

Herbivores or plant eaters feed on plants. They are termed **primary consumers**. These animals range from [aphids](#) which suck plant juices, to large browsing animals like giraffes and elephants.



2- Carnivores

Carnivores or meat eaters feed only on other animals and are thus secondary or tertiary consumers such as lions, cats, tigers, etc.



3- Omnivores

Omnivores feed on both plant and animal material. Human beings are good examples of omnivores.



4- Decomposers

Decomposers feed on food and decomposing matter or detritus.

Detritus is the remains of plants and animals following their death and fragmentation by soil organisms. Bacteria and fungi of decay are important decomposers, but so are other soil organisms, such as earthworms and small arthropods.

Incomplete ecosystem,

The ecosystems that do not contain all the four basic components, i.e., abiotic substances, producers, consumers, decomposers are called incomplete ecosystem. Example- Abyssal depth of sea and caves lack producers but contain only consumers and decomposers.

Levels of studying ecology:

Population:

Population is a summation of all the organisms of the same group or species, which live in a particular geographical area, **at a particular time** and have the capability of interbreeding.

Community

A **community** may be thought of as **the living (biotic) component of the ecosystem. It consists of a number of populations of different species found in a particular place **at a particular time**.** The term 'community' is sometimes used in another, entirely different context; that of populations of similar organisms (e.g. the bird community of a lake, seashore or forest). The concept of community, however it is used, has as its main focus the study of biotic interactions.

Biome:

A **biome** involves **the linkage of ecosystems into regional classes, which have similar characteristics.** For example, grassland biomes in similar climatic areas of the world have similar characteristics as pertains to temperature regimes, rainfall, fire cycles, etc.

Environment (biophysical),

Environment is the physical and biological factors along with their chemical interactions that affect an organism or a group of organisms or in other meaning the living things and what is around them. Organisms change in response to conditions in their environment. In the environment there are interactions between plants, animals, soil, water, temperature, light, and other living and non-living things.