

Rainforests

What is a Rainforest?

Rainforests are areas with many leafy plants, tall trees and high rainfall. Rainforests are bursting with life.

More than half the world's species of plants and animals live in rainforests. Rainforests are hot and very humid places.

Layers of a Rainforest

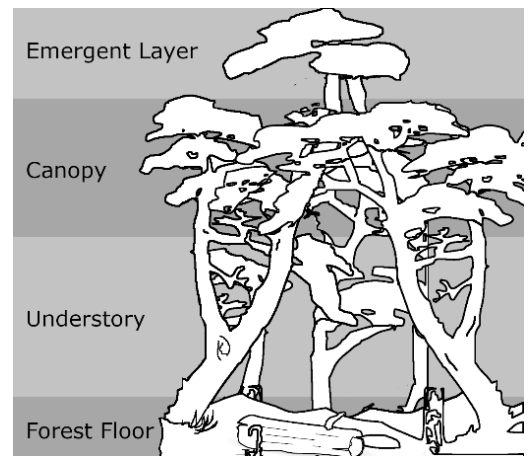
Rainforests have four main layers.

The first layer is the forest floor. Very little sunlight reaches the forest floor and so it is a very dark place.

Above the forest floor is the understory. Shrubs, bushes and younger trees are found in this layer.

The canopy layer is like a roof over the rainforest. It is home to more life than any of the other layers.

At the top is the emergent layer. The very tallest of the trees are found in this layer. The sunlight is very strong up this high.



Layers of a rainforest

Animals

A very large number of plants grow in rainforests because there is so much sunlight and rainfall. All these plants and trees provide animals with many places to live.



Many species of monkeys live in rainforests

The forest floor and understory layer are home to many insects, frogs and snakes as well as some of the larger rainforest animals like jaguars and anteaters.

Animals that live in the canopy include monkeys, birds, sloths and lizards. Some of the animals that live in the canopy never need to touch the ground!

The emergent layer is home to some species of eagles, hawks and some other birds.