

Vocabulary Master List

Anatomy – The study of the parts of an organism in order to ascertain their position, relationship, structure and function.

Aquatic – Living or growing in, on, or near water.

Ballast – Water or other heavy material placed in the hold of a ship for stability.

Biodiversity – The variety of plant and animal species present in an ecosystem.

Camouflage – Colors and patterns that help an object blend in with its surroundings.

Compete – The process of two or more organisms demanding limited environmental resources, such as nutrients, living space or light.

Compressiform – Body flat from side to side and tall and thin when viewed from the front.

Depressiform – Body flattened from top to bottom and wide and thin when viewed from the front.

Dichotomous – Divided or dividing into two parts or classifications.

Dichotomous key – A series of questions that leads to the identification of a species.

Disperser – An organism that spreads or distributes fruits and/or seeds from a stationary parent plant.

Emarginate – Having a notched margin.

Eradicate – Eliminate, exterminate, remove.

Filiform – Long, skinny tube-shaped body.

Forked – Having two or more branches or points.

Fusiform – Streamlined oval-shaped body.

Invader/Invasive species – A plant or animal that is not native and causes harm, including disrupting natural ecosystems.

Invasion rate – How quickly invasive species are being established in a geographic region. A rate is a change in something over time.

Lunate – Shaped like a crescent or quarter-moon.

Morphology – The study of organisms' structure or form.

Native species – A plant or animal that originated in a certain place. A species occurring in its natural range. Species that were present in Florida at the time the first Spanish settlers arrived.

Niche – The unique role of an organism in its ecosystem.

Nitrogen – A nutrient required in large amounts as an essential component of proteins, nucleic acids and other cellular constituents.

Nitrogen fixation – Organisms cannot use nitrogen gas (N_2), but the gas can be "fixed" or converted into ammonia by bacteria.

Non-native species – A species introduced to a region intentionally or accidentally.

Pathway – The geographic path a species follows on its way to an introduction.

Perennial – A plant that is lasting or active through the year or many years.

Plankton – Small plants or animals that cannot swim strongly, so they drift with currents.

Point transect – A series of points surveyed along a tape measure anchored at a random point and stretched to a predetermined length.

Predator – An organism that feeds on another organism.

Quadrats – Survey grids of a fixed size and shape.

Rounded – Curved or shaped like part of a circle.

Species – A basic taxonomic group that subdivides a genus; it comprises individuals of common ancestry that strongly resemble each other physiologically and interbreed to produce fertile offspring.

Taxonomy – The science of classifying organisms into groups or taxa.

Truncate – Short and square or slightly rounded.

Vector – The means, or transport mechanism, by which species are moved from one location to another.