

2011 International Year of Forests



Every part of the tree plays an important part in the forest, leaves break down and form soil for other plants and creatures. Leaves also play an important role in taking up CO2 (carbon dioxide) from the air through photosynthesis and emitting oxygen for us to breathe.

Forested wetlands are diverse habitats that support a wide variety of plant and animal species, including many bird species. They also filter nutrients and wastes from the water that flows through them and provide flood control by holding excess water.



Down woody debris plays a critical role in amphibian habitat as well as for other forest dependent species. Healthy forests have some woody debris of varying decay stages, ages, and species to support these forest creatures.

Trees are a critical part of the hydrological cycle. They soak up rainwater from the soil and release it back into the air from their leaves. This leads to more rain, creating a continuous loop.



The diversity of a forest goes beyond the trees. The forest floor has an array of understory plants that are important for habitat and food. The understory is also made up of tiny seedlings, waiting to grow into future forests.

We are all dependent on the forest for employment, recreation, spirituality, food, fuel and products. By managing our forest resources in a sustainable manner, we can ensure that future generations can also enjoy these things for years to come.



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS • 2011

The UN has declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011

How are you celebrating the International Year of Forests? Check out **Focus on Forests** for lesson plans and activities that encourage you to learn more about the value of our forests.

Forests help to clean water sources by acting as filters for water moving through the soil and down into the water table. Trees on water edges, or “riparian areas”, also play an important role in stabilizing banks, and providing shade and homes for creatures in these ecosystems.



Wood products come from forests. Think of your house, did you know that the frame is mostly likely made of wood? Think about the other things in your house that may be made of wood- furniture, paper, and musical instruments.

Trees are an important food source not only for forest creatures, but also for us. Mangoes, oranges, bananas, apples, nuts, maple syrup, chocolate and even gum all come from forests!



Many of our medicines come from forests. As we learn more about forests around the world we are discovering new and important medicines.

Forests ecosystems have high biodiversity and they provide food and shelter for numerous wildlife species, from small to big.



Focus on Forests

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