

Habitat: What Animals Need to Live

To survive, animals need food, water, and a safe home. Knowing what animals need to live will help you search for wildlife clues.

Food is essential for all wildlife. Some animals eat parts of plants such as nuts, berries, leaves, and twigs. These animals, called *herbivores*, can live only where their food plants grow. Deer and rabbits are examples of herbivores.

Other animals eat insects, mice, rabbits, and other animals. Animals that eat other animals are called *carnivores*; they are able to live only where they can catch their food. Bobcats are carnivores, as are hawks and owls.

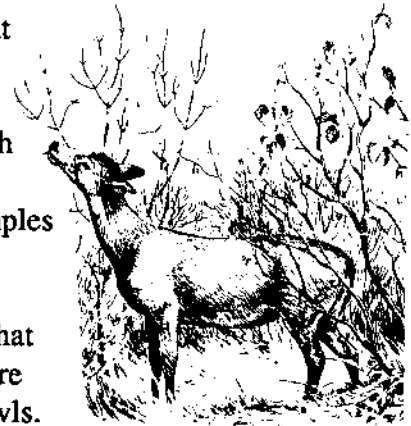
Animals that eat both plants and animals are called *omnivores*. These animals, such as raccoons and opossums, can live in many places. People are omnivores, too!

In addition to food, animals need *water*. Puddles, springs, streams, and ponds provide drinking water for all animals. Some animals can get all the water they need from their food and from dew.

Cover is anything that provides an animal and its young with protection from weather and enemies. A rabbit, for example, hides under bushes when a fox or hawk is nearby. Woodchucks take cover in underground burrows. Your cover is the building you live in.

Along with cover, animals need a certain amount of *space*. Large animals, like the black bear, may wander several miles in search of food. On the other hand, some small animals may never travel more than a few hundred feet from their home. Each animal must be able to find all the food, water, and cover it needs within the space it travels.

Habitat is the physical area where an animal lives. You can think of it as the animal's home address. An animal's habitat has everything it needs to live. The forest is the habitat of the gray squirrel. Within the forest the squirrel builds nests in hollow trees and eats nuts, tree flowers, and buds. A marsh is the habitat of muskrats and many kinds of ducks. Other habitats in Pennsylvania include fields and meadows, lakes and ponds, streams and rivers, and brushy openings.



WHITETAIL DEER



RACCOON



BROAD-WINGED HAWK



BLACK BEAR

AMERICAN WIDGEON

