

Deep in the Heart of Texas



DeAndra Ramsey
Coordinator, School Programs

Agenda

What today will look like

- 10 minutes
 - Importance of trees to plants and animals
 - *Activity - Trees as Habitats*
- 10 minutes
 - Importance of trees to humans
 - *Activity - We All Need Trees*
- 10 minutes
 - Trees and ecosystems
 - *Activity - Coyote Carrying Capacity*
- 10 minutes
 - Doing our part
 - *Discussion – saving our wild spaces and wildlife*



Objectives

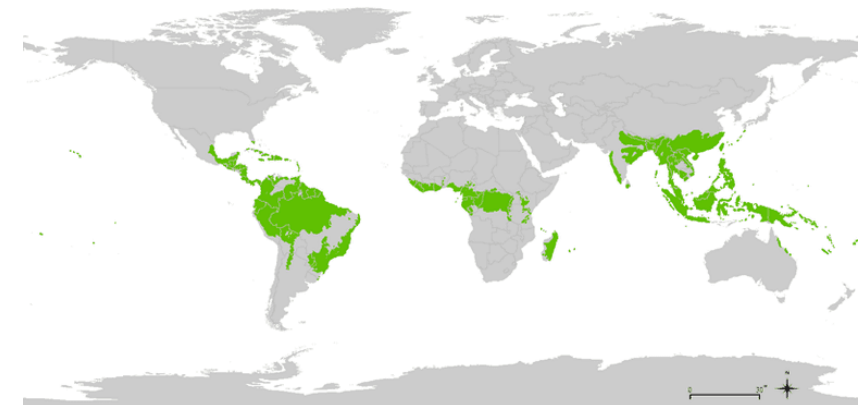
By the end of today, we should:

- Importance of trees in a forest ecosystem and various ways animals use them.
- Importance of trees/forest habitats to people.
- Animals that live in forests in Texas, how these animals utilize forests
- What the Houston Zoo is doing to help save black bears
- What they can do at home or school to help save black bears



Forests of the world...

- Deciduous
- Coniferous
- Broadleaf
- Mixed forest
- Rainforest
- Oh my!!



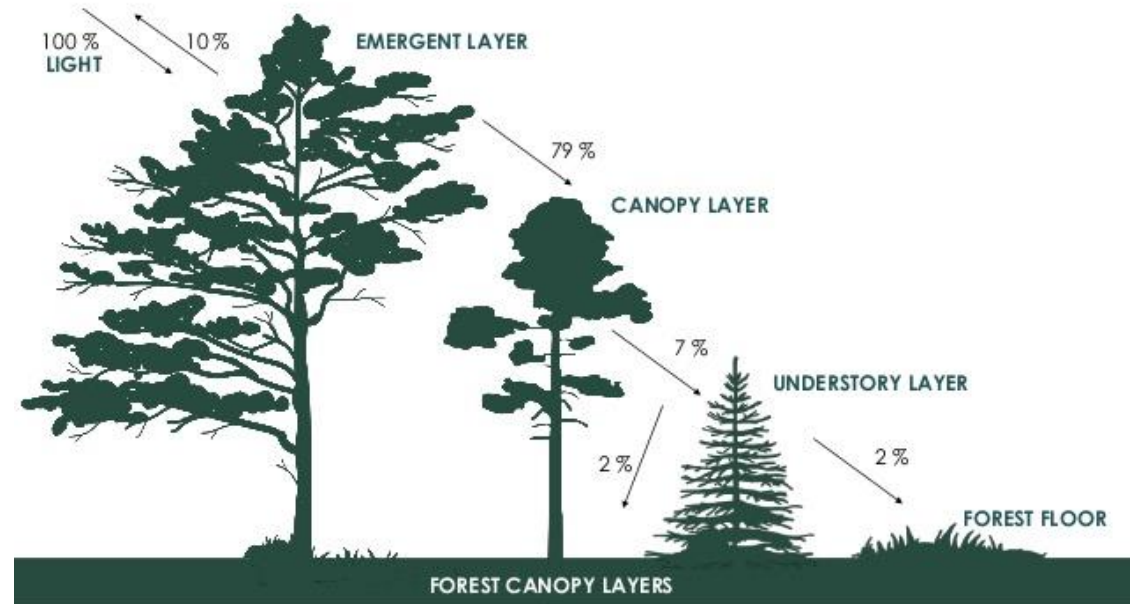
Forests of the world...

-
- Types are distinguished from each other according to:
 - species composition
 - density of tree cover
 - type of soils found
 - geologic history of the region.



Life in Layers

- Crowded biomes
- Don't spread out; spread up!
- 4 layers of the forest
 - Forest floor
 - Understory
 - Canopy
 - Emergent layer



Life in Layers



Activity – Trees as Habitats



-
- Grab a clip board
 - Let's get outside!



Humans and Trees



- Clean the air
 - Mitigate run off
 - Cool the surroundings
 - Beautify our neighborhoods
- *‘To exist as a nation, to prosper as a state, and to live as a people, we must have trees.’ - Theodore Roosevelt*



Humans and Trees

- Studies have shown that patients with views of trees out their windows heal faster and with less complications.
- Children with ADHD show fewer symptoms when they have access to nature.
- Exposure to trees and nature aids concentration by reducing mental fatigue



Humans and Trees

- Products

- Wood
- Paper
- Fruits and other foods
- Syrup



Humans and Trees

- Products

- Rubber
- Chewing gum
- Loofa sponges
- Wine corks
- Henna dye
- Medicines



Activity – We All Need Trees



- Heads Up – Tree Edition
- Let's play!



Trees – the backbone of the ecosystem

- A forest is a complex ecological system in which trees are the dominant life-form
- Vital to the biome
- Over 60,000 different species of trees worldwide



Trees – the backbone of the ecosystem



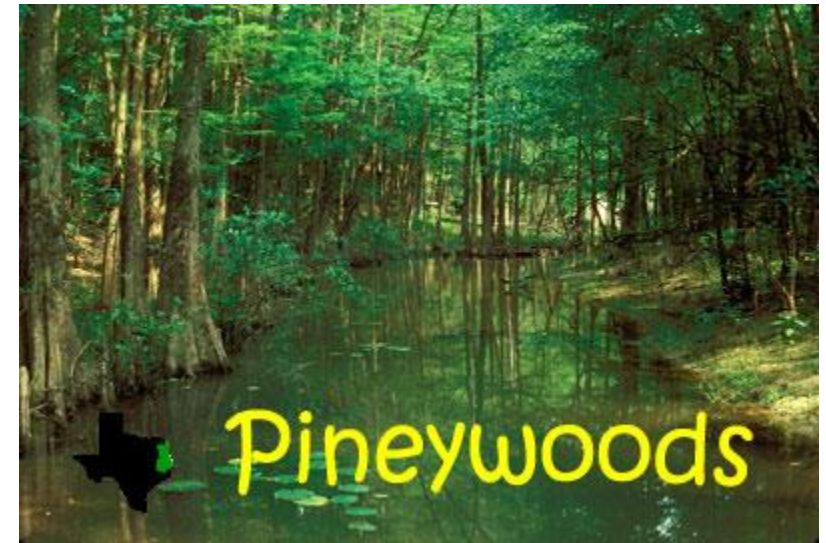
- Home to 80% of the world's terrestrial biodiversity
- Complex webs of organisms that include plants, animals, fungi and bacteria



Trees – the backbone of the ecosystem



- East Texas
- Terrain is rolling with lower, wetter bottomlands that grow hardwood trees such as elm, mesquite and ash



Trees – the backbone of the ecosystem

- Southern short-tailed shrew
- Seminole bat
- Ringtail
- Virginia opossum
- Rafinesque's big-eared bat
- Eastern cottontail
- Common gray fox
- Striped skunk
- Bobcat



Activity – Coyote Carrying Capacity

- We will be in packs of coyotes...at tables
- Let's play!



Doing our part



- Paper Reduction and Recycling
- The Houston Zoo uses paper made of recycled materials for our admission tickets.
- The Houston Zoo only uses toilet paper made from recycled content



Admission tickets
ARE NOW MADE OF
100%
recycled
content
SAVING TREES THAT
bears need
to survive

Doing our part

- Bears need trees to live, so by using less paper or recycled-content paper products, fewer trees are cut down meaning you are contributing to saving black bears in the wild!
- Consider going paperless for billing or even when purchasing tickets for your next visit to the Zoo.



Doing our part

- What are some ways YOU can help save black bears and Texas trees they depend on?

