Ecological Scavenger Hunt

Assigned: 9/3/2015

Due: 9/24 A, 9/25 B

If you examine any outdoor “ecosystem”, you will find many types of interactions occurring. Producers (autotrophs) and consumers (heterotrophs) interact with each other and decomposers and detritivores in a variety of ways. You may also find evidence of competition for food, space and shelter, predator-prey relationships, and various types of symbiosis.

For this scavenger hunt, it is important not to disturb the space that you are investigating. You can pick your own backyard, a park or any other outdoor space to observe and document examples of interactions. In most scavenger hunts you are asked to collect different items. For this “hunt”, you will do your collecting with a camera, or a pencil and notebook.

You will take pictures or sketch what you consider to be the most interesting examples of ecosystem interactions from the list below and provide a “caption” of how each picture you take relates to the listed interaction. Your final product will be a digital scrapbook of these pictures with their appropriate captions along with printed paper copies of your images. Your assignment is to produce 4 quality images.

1. humans and wildlife share environments
2. people have changed the environment
3. predator and prey relationships exist in the area
4. plant disease or insect damage can be seen
5. simple food chains are seen in this ecosystem
6. a community of interacting organisms
7. Interaction between BIOTIC and ABIOTIC factors
8. A symbiotic relationship between two organisms: commensal, parasitic, or mutualistic

To earn full credit, you must document at least 4 examples from the list (a – h above). Strive to produce quality images documenting the specific interactions. Be open-minded and prepared to OBSERVE the environment around you. CHALLENGE yourself to notice the details. SEE whether your observations lead to questions.

NOTE: Your images should reflect natural (ie, “unstaged”) situations. Getting your friends to “pose” as members of a population for example, is unacceptable. Photography is ideal. However, carefully and thoughtfully hand drawn depictions will also be accepted.