

Secrets of the Rain Forest



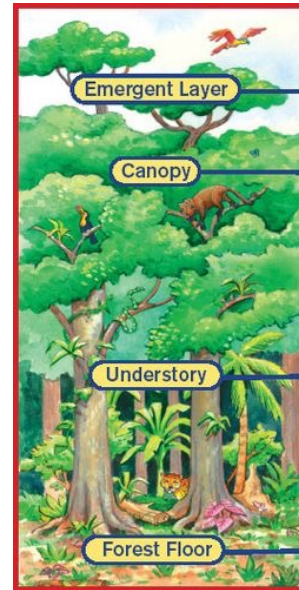
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Life in a Tropical Rain Forest

What can you find in this amazing place?

Welcome to a **tropical rain forest** ! It is a warm, rainy place with

many tall trees. More than half of the world's **species** , or types, of plants and animals are found here.



David Sheldon

Birds, bats, and butterflies live in the tops of the tallest trees. That is called the **emergent layer**.

In the tops of the shorter trees, or **canopy**, you can find animals such as toucans and monkeys.

Snakes, red-eyed tree frogs, and other animals live in the **understory**, or lower branches.

Animals such as jaguars can be found on the dark **forest floor**.

Layers of Life

A tropical rain forest has four layers. From top to bottom, the forest is full of life.



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People walk on a bridge through a tropical rain forest canopy.

Trees Clean the Air

You can thank tropical rain forests for keeping the air clean. Trees help to recycle Earth's air. The leaves take in a gas called **carbon dioxide** . Too much carbon dioxide in the air is harmful to people. The leaves then give off a gas called **oxygen** . People need oxygen to stay alive.

Foods and Medicine

What do lemons, chocolate, and cashew nuts have in common? They are foods that first came from tropical rain forests. Hundreds of foods grow there today.

Many medicines are made from rain forest plants. Today, scientists are studying the plants to find new medicines to cure diseases.



Marion Brenner/Jupiter
Images
*Lemon trees grow in
tropical rain forests.*