# BIOMES

A **biome** is a large, natural, region on the earth that has a certain **climate** and certain kinds of **organisms**. There are two main groups of biomes, **terrestrial** (land) biomes and **aquatic** (water) biomes both freshwater and marine.

There are **six land biomes: Tropical Rain Forest**, **Deciduous Forest**, **Desert**, **Grassland**, **Tundra** and **Taiga**.

**Tropical Rain Forests** are noted for strong sunlight and warm, wet climate which provide ideal growing conditions for a variety of plants and animals. Most plants and animals on earth live in the tropical rain forests. The Bahamas has a climate very similar to that of the tropical rain forests. Many insects, bats, birds and mammals live in the tropical rain forest. The plants in the rain forest are in **three layers: canopy**, **understory** and **forest floor**.

**The Deciduous Forest** has plants with broad leaves. The plants shed leaves every year and remain off the trees for almost three months during winter. Several **layers** of plants can be found in the Deciduous Forest. They are **canopy, understory, shrub layer** and **forest floor layer**. A variety of plants and animals live in the deciduous forest. Some animals are squirrels, deer, rabbits and beavers, foxes, black bears hawks and snakes.

**The desert biome** receives very little rainfall. The rain that does fall evaporates quickly. During the nights, deserts are often very cold. Desert plants are adapted to survive with very little water. The common desert plants, cacti, store water in their thick stems. Plants such as the creosote bush, have **small, waxy leaves**. Desert animals also have adaptations to prevent water loss. Snakes and lizards have **dry scaly skin**. Many desert animals hunt at night to avoid the heat.

**The Tundra** - is the coldest of the biomes. The tundra gets about as much precipitation as the average desert. Permafrost, the area below the ground is permanently frozen year round, it prevents trees from growing. It's barren - the tundra has few nutrients to support plant and animal life. It has a short growing season and a slow rate of decay.