

**Previous knowledge: What should I already know?**

- The names of the world's seven continents and five oceans.
- How to use a map, an atlas or a globe to identify geographical features such as continents, countries, oceans, rivers and mountains.
- Identify the features of a river and understand how humans and environmental changes can affect them.

**Key knowledge: What should I know by the end of the unit?**

- By the end of this unit we will:
- Know where many of the world's rainforests are situated
  - Understand the main features of a rainforest
  - Be able to use the terms emergent layer, canopy, understory and forest floor
  - Know about endangered animals in the rainforests
  - Understand deforestation and arguments for and against
  - Locate the Amazon and know about some unique plants that are found there

**Key facts / information**



**The Amazon Rainforest** Situated in South America, it is the largest rainforest in the world. The Amazon rainforest spreads across nine different countries. The Amazon River - the second longest river in the world at 7000km - runs through it.



**What lives in the Amazon rainforest?**  
 40,000 species of plants  
 2,400 species of freshwater fish  
 370 species of reptile  
 2.5 million species of insects

**Vocabulary**

**biome** A large area of the Earth that has a certain climate and certain types of living things. A rainforest is an example of a type of biome.

**canopy** A dense leafy layer with trees about 40m tall where the majority of life in the rainforest is found.

**climate** The weather in a certain place. The climate determines which plants and animals can survive there.

**conservation** The protection of things found in nature so that they will be around in the future.

**deforestation** The action of clearing a wide area of trees.

**ecosystem** A community of organisms (living things) that interact with one another and with their physical environment.

**emergent layer** This is made up of the tallest trees in the rainforest (some up to 70m tall). Their huge leafy crowns spread out to catch as much sunlight as possible.

**endangered** A type of plant or animal that is in danger of disappearing forever. If it dies out completely, it becomes extinct.

**equator** An imaginary circle around the Earth that divides it into two equal parts - the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere.

**forest floor** This is the lowest part of the rainforest and is like a carpet of dead leaves. It is dim and shady and so fewer plants grow here.

**humid** Feeling very damp due to water vapour (a gas) in the air.

**indigenous** People that are native to a certain place. They are the first people who lived there.

**nocturnal** An animal that is active at night and sleeps during the day.

**species** A group of animals or plants that are similar to one another.

**tropical** A place that is warm all year round and has rainy seasons. These places are close to the equator.

**understory** It is full of leafy bushes and small trees entwined with vines. It is dark and hot. Many of the animals living here are nocturnal.

**vegetation** All the plants and trees that live in an area.



