

# Characteristics of the Earth's Terrestrial Biomes

Many places on Earth share similar climatic conditions despite being found in geographically different areas. As a result of natural selection, comparable ecosystems have developed in these separated areas.

Scientists call these major ecosystem types biomes.

## Green shield lichen

Tube Lichen

*Cladonia rangiferina* (reindeer lichen)

Lichens are mutualistic combinations of a fungus and either an alga or cyanobacteria, and are able to survive in harsh conditions by growing close to the ground in thick colonies on nearly bare rock, or in a thin layer of soil.

The principal herbivores in this biome include caribou, musk ox, arctic hare, voles, and lemmings

The understory of boreal forest habitats is usually poorly developed  
Common understory species include orchids,  
shrubs like rose, blueberry, and cranberry.



Most desert mammals tend to be nocturnal to avoid the high temperatures. Desert habitats have a rich lizard and snake fauna because high temperatures promote the success of cold blooded life forms

## **Aquatic biomes (marine and freshwater)**

### **Aquatic biomes**

- **cover three-quarters of the Earth's surface**

**include**

- **rivers, lakes : FRESH WATER**
- **coral reefs, estuaries, and open ocean : MARINE**

**Oceans account for almost all of this area.**

# Ponds and lakes

