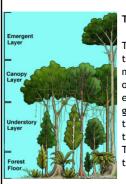


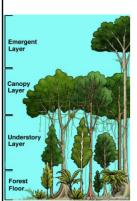
May 10-9:01 AM



The Emergent Layer

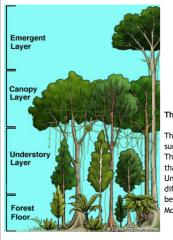
The tallest trees are the emergents, towering as much as 200 feet (60 meters) above the forest floor. Most of these trees are broad-leaved evergreens. They are exposed to greater fluctuations of temperature, wind, and rainfall than are their smaller companions. To hold water, leaves often have thick, waxy layers

May 10-9:04 AM



The Canopy

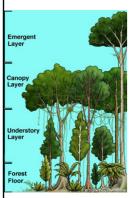
The canopy extends beneath the emergents, rising to 150 feet. (45 meters). Most canopy trees have smooth oval leaves that *come* to a point. The possible explanation for this adaptation is that they shed rain quickly, discouraging the growth of lichens and mosses.



The Understory

This area gets only 2% to 5% of the sunlight available to the canopy. These plants seldom grow to more than 12 feet in height (3.5 meters). Under-story plants have a more difficult time with pollination because of the lack of air 'movement. Most rely on insects.

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The Forest Floor

Almost no plants grow in this region of no light and 100% Humidity. The floor itself is covered with a litter of rapidly decomposing vegetation and organisms that break down into usable nutrients. There is heavy competition for the nutrients released by decomposition. This is why many trees are so shallowrooted.

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Climbers and Epiphytes

Climbers, like the Lianas, attach themselves to the trunks of trees by clinging roots that may absorb water and nutrients from their hosts. Epiphytes use other plants for support only.