

## **Sky Hunters Environmental Education**

### **Who is Eating Whom Vocabulary**

**Adaptation** - a change in a living thing that allows it to better fit for survival in its environment.

**Beak** – the bill of a bird, used for food gathering, preening, nest building and defense of a territory. Adapted to the type of bird, example - the hooked bill of a bird of prey that is adapted for tearing.

**Behavior** – the way an animal acts often in response to something in its environment; an inherited pattern of automatic responses (such as courtship or nesting).

**Bird of prey** – a predatory bird that uses its strong feet and sharp talons to catch and carry prey, has a hooked bill to kill and tear prey, and eats other animals – also called a Raptor.

**Carnivore** – a flesh-eating animal, usually a predator.

**Carrying capacity** – a limit to the number of each species that can live in a habitat.

**Crepuscular** – is active during twilight hours; in the early morning and early evening hours.

**Decomposers** – these are living things that feed off dead plants and animals and reduce their remains to minerals and gases. Examples are fungi, mushrooms, and bacteria.

**Diurnal** – an animal that is active by day and sleeps at night.

**Ecosystem** (short for ecological system) - is an ecological community together with its physical environment, considered as a unit. All ecosystems are "open" systems in the sense that energy and matter are transferred in and out. Example: The Earth as a single ecosystem constantly converts solar energy into myriad organic products, and has increased in biological complexity over time.

**Food Chain** – is the flow of energy through a system. Begins with plants obtaining energy from the sun and involves predator/prey interactions.

**Food Web** – consists of interlocking food chains, all the individual animal food chains within a habitat.

**Habitat** – the area or type of environment where plants or animals naturally live or occur. A habitat provides plants and animals with a place to find food, shelter, water, space and a safe place to raise their young.

**Herbivore** – plant eating animals, animals that depend upon plants for food.

**Migrate** – to move from one area or climate to another for feeding or breeding.

**Molt** – the process of shedding feathers and growing new ones.

**Niche** – the role an organism plays in a community, how it interacts with the environment and other organisms. An animal's habitat is its home, its niche is its job.

**Nocturnal** – active at night and sleeps during the day.

**Omnivore** – animals that eat both plants and other animals for food. Humans are omnivores.

**Predator** – an animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals.

**Prey** – an animal that is hunted, killed, and eaten by other animals.

**Raptor** – a predatory bird that uses strong feet and sharp talon to catch and carry prey, has a hooked bill to kill and tear prey, and is carnivorous by nature.

**Rousing** – cleansing action of a bird in which all contour feathers are elevated, wings and tail are held loosely, and the bird vigorously shakes itself.

**Talon** – the long, sharp, curved claw of a bird of prey.

**Wing span** – the distance from the tip of one outstretched wing to the tip of the other outstretched wing also called wingspread.

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