

Canopy

- Highest level of the forest
- Top branches and leaves of the trees → Leaves absorb sunlight for *photosynthesis!*
- Provides shade, shelter, or a home for the forest
- Home to *birds and other small animals* b/c it provides them shelter
- Canopy protects the forest floor

Understory

- located under all the leaves, so it is darker.
 - Where all the branches and part of the trunks are.
 - The plants here don't grow as quickly or as much b/c very little sunlight reaches this layer.
- Provides shelter for birds and small animals (ex. Squirrel), insects.

Underbrush/ Shrub Layer

- Smaller plants are located here (like shrubs and other small plants).
- Home to lots of wildlife: weasels, deer, skunks, rabbits, bears
- Other vegetation grows here: ferns, wildflowers, and other soft stem plants, tree seedlings

Forest Floor

- Ground cover and the soil: leaf litter, mushrooms/fungi, insects, pinecones & needles.
- The supports of the tree, the roots, are found here in the base layer of the forest.
- Soil is rich in organic material, moss, and decomposers.
- You will find: soil, dirt, sand, pebbles, etc. here and underground.
- Home to: Worms, millipedes, centipedes, roly-polly beetles, termites