



*Forest Floor Terrarium  
Background Information*



# *Bacteria*

## *What is it?*

Bacteria is a common name which represents a group of one-celled microscopic organisms.

These organisms are neither plants nor animals, but are classified as monerans. There are literally thousands of different types of bacteria.

## *How does it relate to this activity?*

The forest floor provides the right conditions for bacteria to grow. These bacteria help to decompose decaying matter, such as logs and leaves, by feeding on their stored energy.

## *Did you know?*

People cannot live without bacteria. Bacteria help to decompose plant and animal matter back to nutrients that sustain ecosystems. Bacteria present in your stomach aid in digestion. Bacteria are used by people to make foods such as yogurt and cheese. There are bacteria that can harm humans, such as the bacteria in untreated water that can spread cholera or the bacteria in meat that can cause botulism (food poisoning), but these bacteria are far outnumbered by bacteria that are beneficial to us.