

GLOSSARY

Acid rain Rain made abnormally acid by pollutants, particularly oxides of sulphur and nitrogen.

Adaptation The process whereby a species selects from a variable gene pool to produce a population capable of efficient interaction with the environment.

Adaptive radiation The pattern in which different organisms develop from a basic form to fill diversified ecological niches.

ADP (adenosine/diphosphate) A doubly phosphorylated organic compound that when further phosphorylated forms ATP.

ATP (adenosine triphosphate) A triply phosphorylated organic compound that stores chemical energy for cell activities.

Amino acid Any of a large group of nitrogenous organic compounds, some of which serve as structural units in proteins.

Angiosperms (flowering plants) Members of the advanced group of plants that carry seeds in an enclosed ovary and have floral reproductive structures.

Anthropoidea A suborder of primate mammals including humans, apes, and monkeys.

Anticline An arch-shape fold of rock layers.

Aquifers A permeable formation that stores and transmits groundwater in quantity adequate to supply wells.

Asteroids Small minor planets that orbit the Sun chiefly between Mars and Jupiter.

Asthenosphere The hot plastic (semisolid) layer in the mantle of the Earth below the rigid lithosphere.

Atmospheric photolysis The process whereby water vapor in the upper atmosphere is split into chemical elements of hydrogen and oxygen. The energy for this reaction is supplied by ultraviolet radiation from the sun.

Atomic number The number of protons in the nucleus of an atom.

Atomic weight The average weight of an element relative to a standard weight of 12 for carbon.

Australopithecine A member of the genus, *Australopithecus*.

Australopithecus (southern ape) A genus of extinct small-brained hominids that are thought to have walked on two legs as their normal means of location.

Australopithecus afarensis The scientific name given to a group of hominids over three million years old, found at Hadar in Ethiopia and at Laetoli in Tanzania. The name translates as "southern ape from Afar" (the Afar Triangle in Ethiopia). Most well-known specimen is "Lucy".

Australopithecus africanus The scientific name for the gracile (slightly built) australopithecine.

Australopithecus robustus The scientific name given to the robust (heavily built) australopithecine found in Africa.

Autotroph An organism that can create its