

How does language reflect our relationship with the natural world?

by Erica Lin

Definitions

A word or phrase that refers to **fauna (animals)** in order to describe something other than that animal

A word or phrase that refers to **flora (plants)** in order to describe something other than that plant

from “anthropomorphize”:

Faunamorphs & Floramorphs

Examples



“underdog”

“monkey around”

“growl”

“birds of a feather”



“uproot”

“rose-coloured glasses”

“greenwash”

“peach fuzz”

Themes

Masculinity/Strength
(bull-necked, hung like a horse)

Femininity/Beauty
(doe-eyed, butterfly kiss)

Deception
(sly as a fox, spin a web of lies)

Freedom
(run like a wild dog, like a moth to a flame)

Hierarchy/Dominance
(head of the pack, better to be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion)

Nurture
(mother hen, take someone under your wing)

Danger/Anger
(mad as a hornet, a wolf in sheep's clothing)

Transformation & Change
(butterfly-shaped, to plant a seed)

Technology
(Amazon, Python, Twitter)

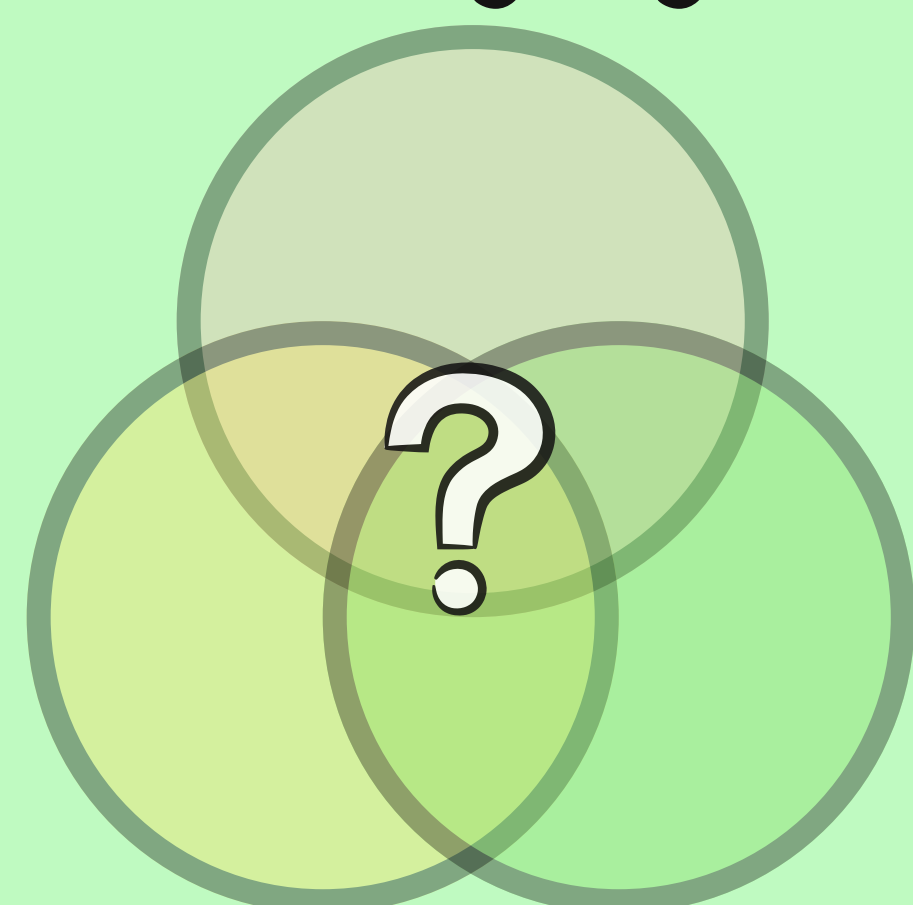
The lexicon

10,000+ words and phrases relating to the natural world

Objectives

- Identify and categorize faunamorphs and floramorphs (and other) terms
- Detect linguistic patterns and thematic groupings
- Analyze how these words reflect human interaction with the environment
- Visualize conceptual connections
- Imagine how language could be used to deepen our connections with the environment

Language



People

Environment

What do these words say about how we relate to the environment?