

Life in Earth

THE ALIEN WORLD AT OUR FEET

One teaspoon of healthy soil holds more creatures than there are people on the whole Earth!

Most organisms that live in soils are microscopically small, but they are crucial for keeping soils in good condition. They include many types of bacteria, fungi, insects and snails...



A WORLD WITHOUT SUNLIGHT

The main source of energy for soil processes is the Sun. However, the lack of sunlight below ground means that soil organisms have to find other ways of getting energy. One way in which they do this is by feeding off dead plants, which have converted sunlight into sugars and other foods.

HOME SWEET HOME

Soil organisms are adapted to live in an environment of small, dark, humid and damp spaces. Most soil inhabitants are microscopically small, meaning they can't easily be seen with the naked eye... which may be a good thing, as many of them look quite scary up close!



UNSTOPPABLE TENTACLES!

Plant roots form the bulk of living organisms in the soil. Feeding roots spread out like tentacles in search of the nutrients and water that are needed for plant growth. Many tree roots are strong enough to crack pavements and damage buildings.

