Unit 3: Population Ecology

Ecology is the

- Study of interactions between organisms and their environment
- Includes both **abiotic** and **biotic** factors

Peurto Vallarta, 2009

Biotic and Abiotic

Biotic factors: living components
Ex. Plants, animals

Abiotic factors: non-living components
Ex. Temperature, soil pH, light, water

Populations vs. Communities

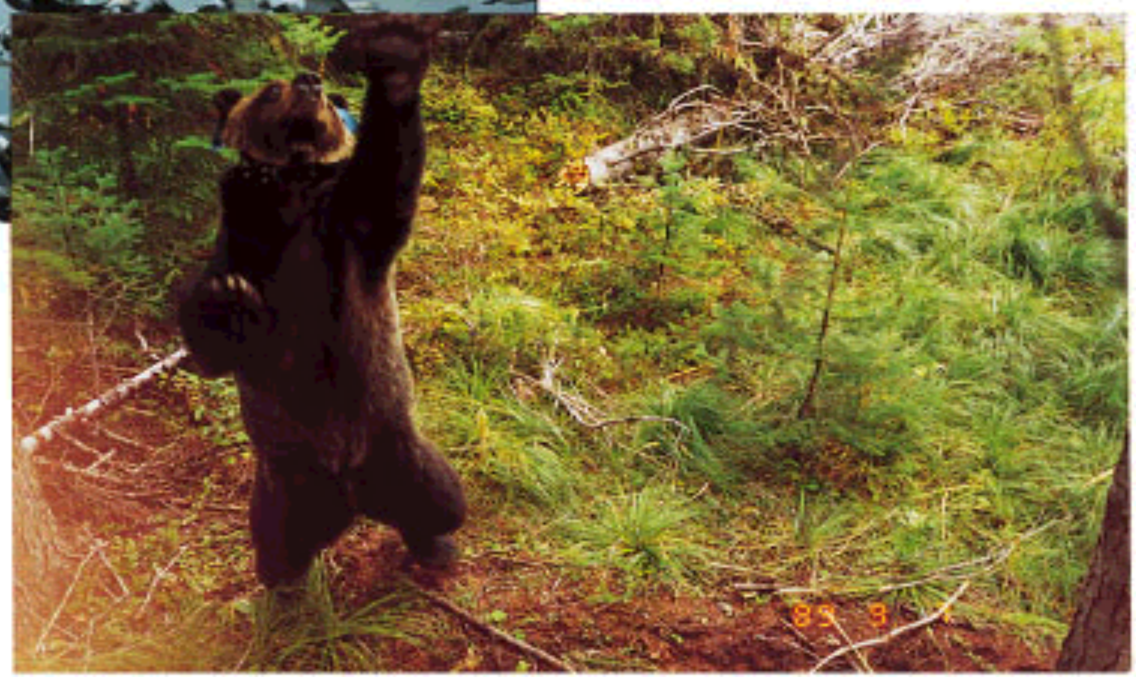
- **Population:**
  - **Any group of individuals of the same species living in the same place at the same time**

Ex. Clown fish

- **Community**
  - **2 or more populations**

Ex. Clown fish, sea horse….

Same species: Same place: Same time!



Animal populations

Ecosystems: Community or Population?

A fallen tree holds a thriving community of organisms

Why is the picture an example of *a community* and not an example of a population?

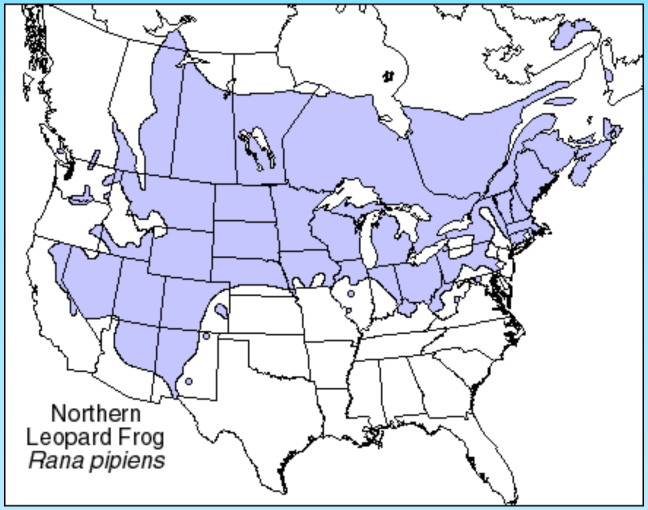
There are many populations living there.

Populations

- Variables we will consider:
    1. Geographic Range
    2. Habitat
    3. Ecological Niche
    4. Population Distribution
    5. Population Size
    6. Population Density
    7. Population Growth Rate and Patterns

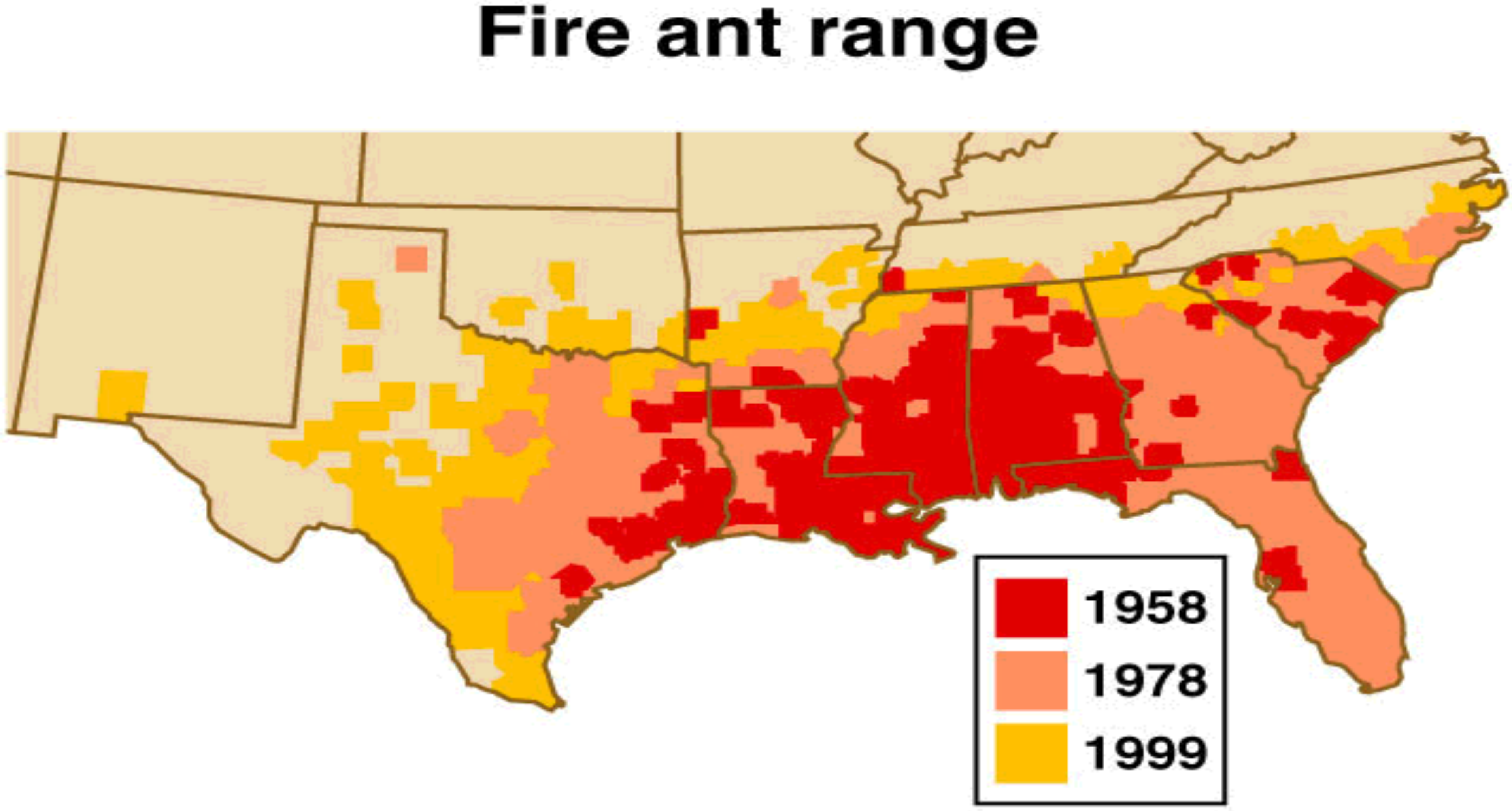
1. Geographical Range

- Where the animal has been seen
- Usually outlined on a **map**
- Can change over time due to biotic and abiotic factors

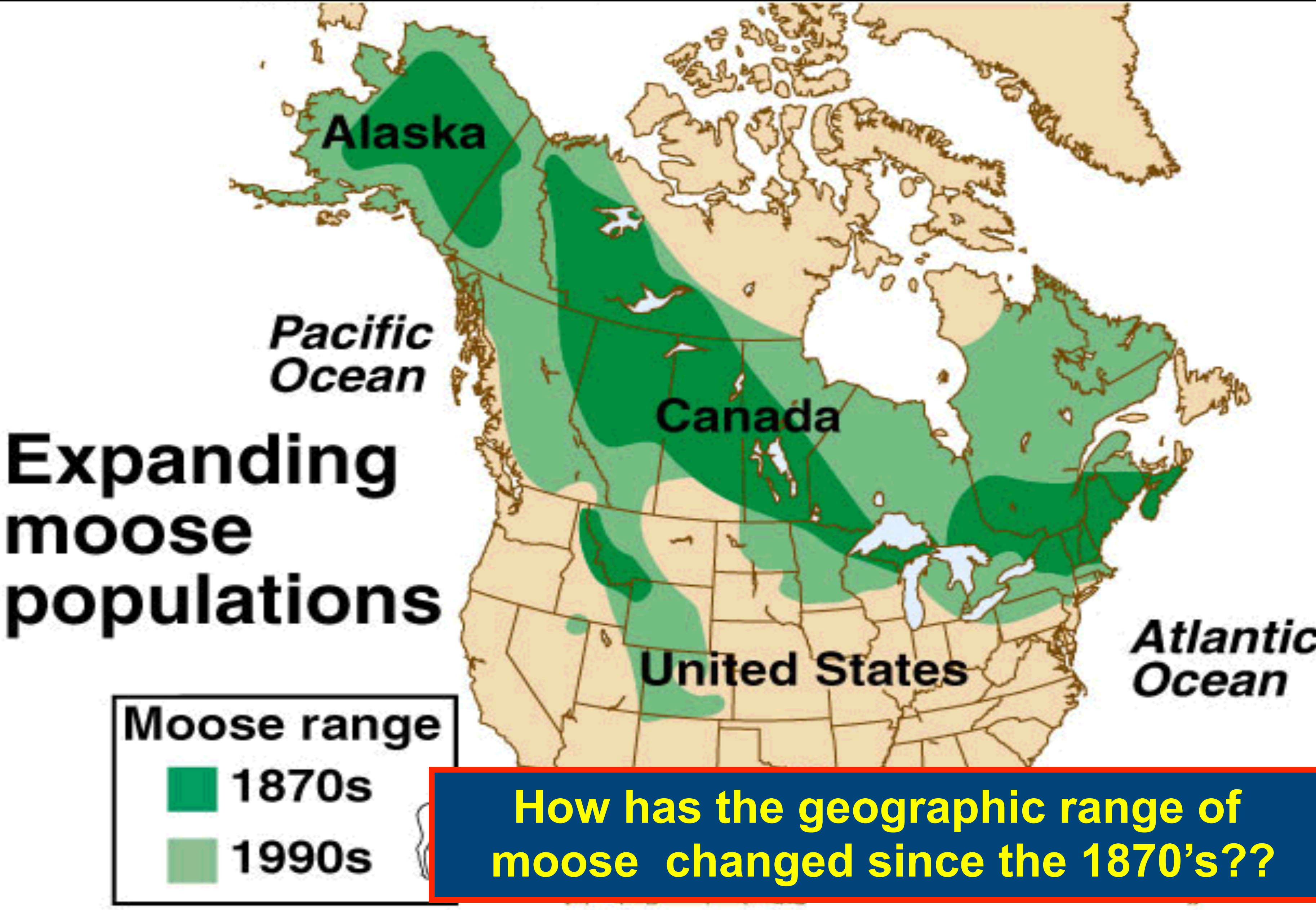


For example: The Northern Leopard Frog has been seen in the Northern United States, mostly on the Eastern and Central areas of the country

Geographic Range: Example 2



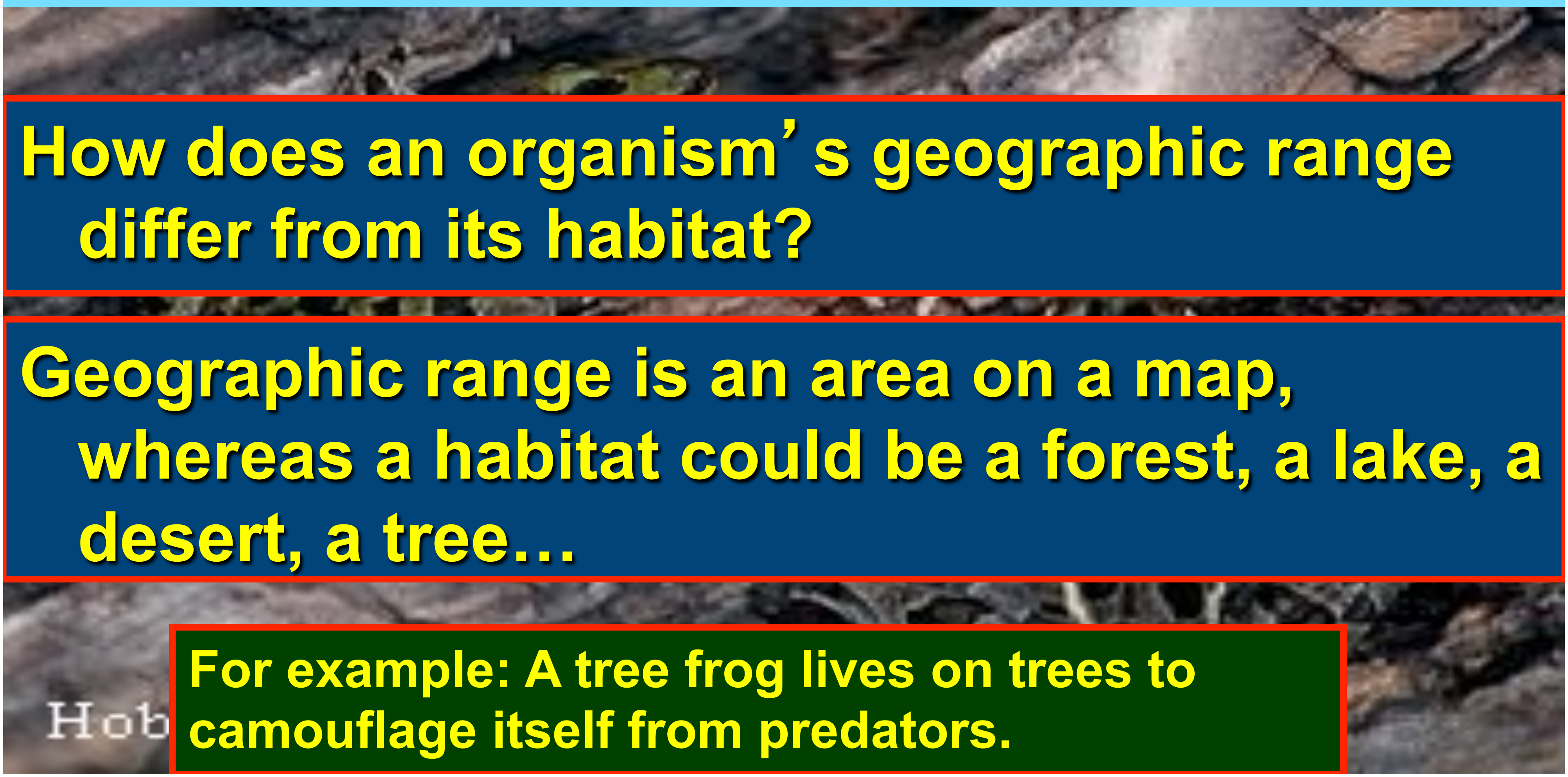
Range Changes in Moose Populations



How has the geographic range of moose changed since the 1870's??

2. Habitat

- area where the population lives
- where environmental conditions are best for survival



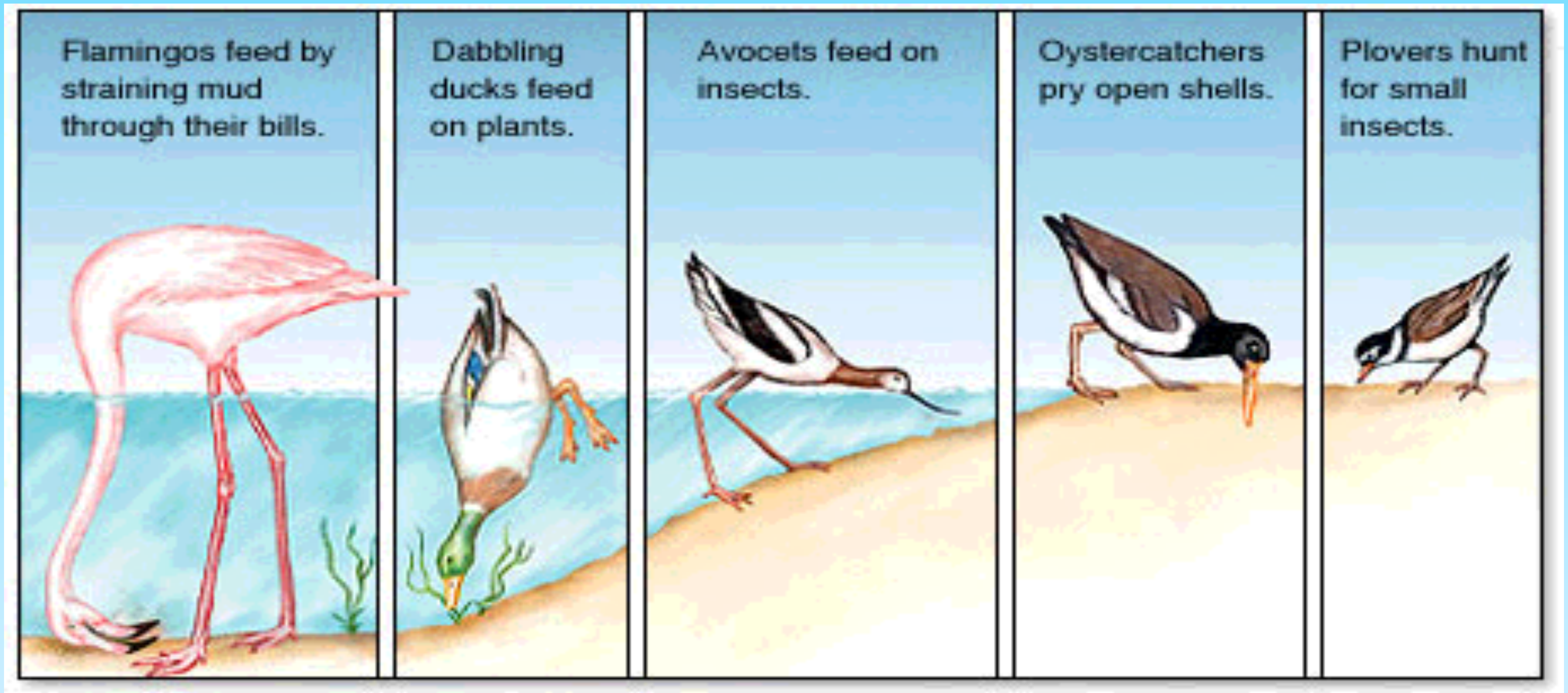
How does an organism's geographic range differ from its habitat?

Geographic range is an area on a map, whereas a habitat could be a forest, a lake, a desert, a tree…

For example: A tree frog lives on trees to camouflage itself from predators.

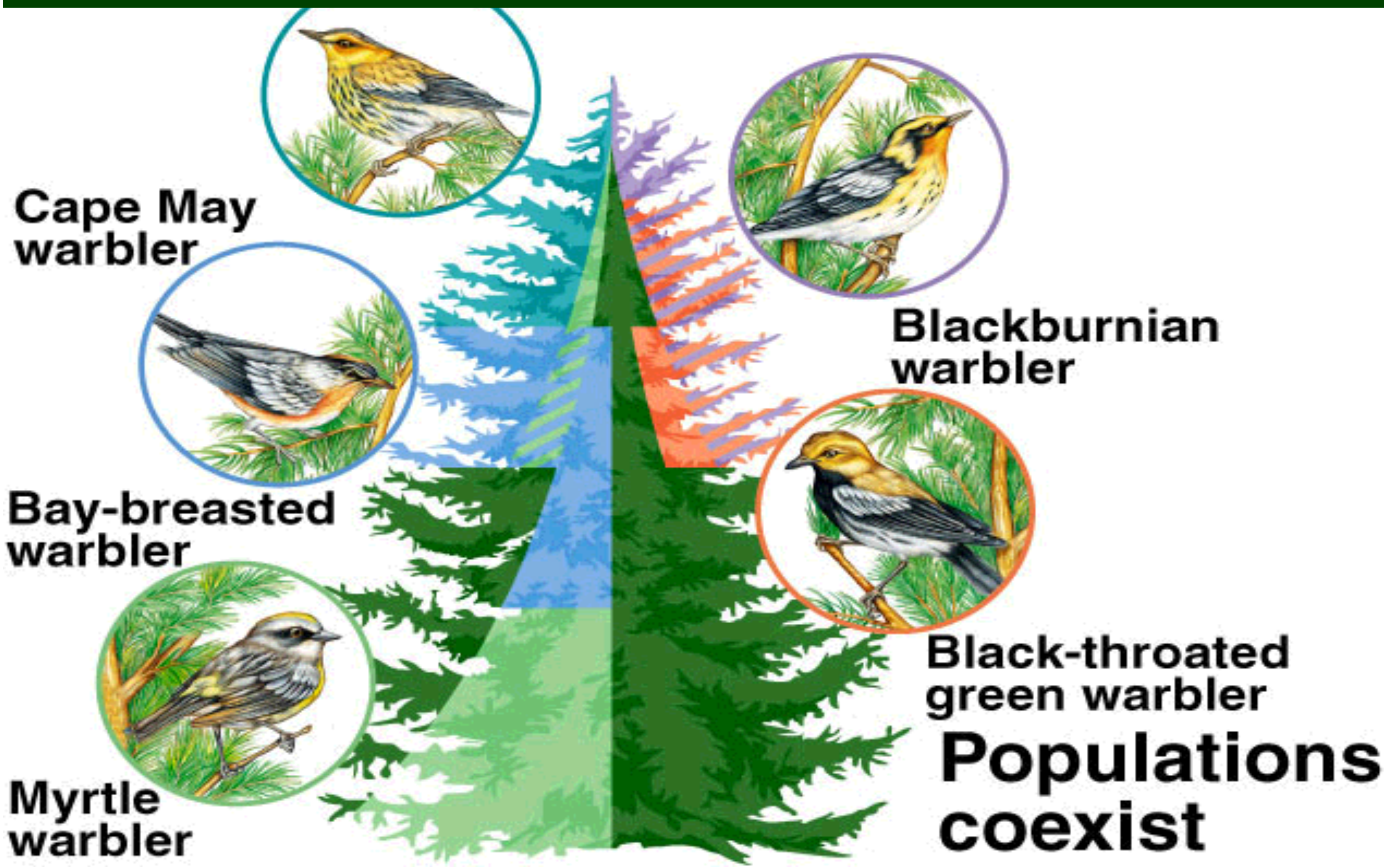
3. Ecological Niche

- **Role of the species in the community (an organism can have more than one role)** your niche is student, mine is teacher
- **Includes ALL *biotic and abiotic* factors a species needs to survive**

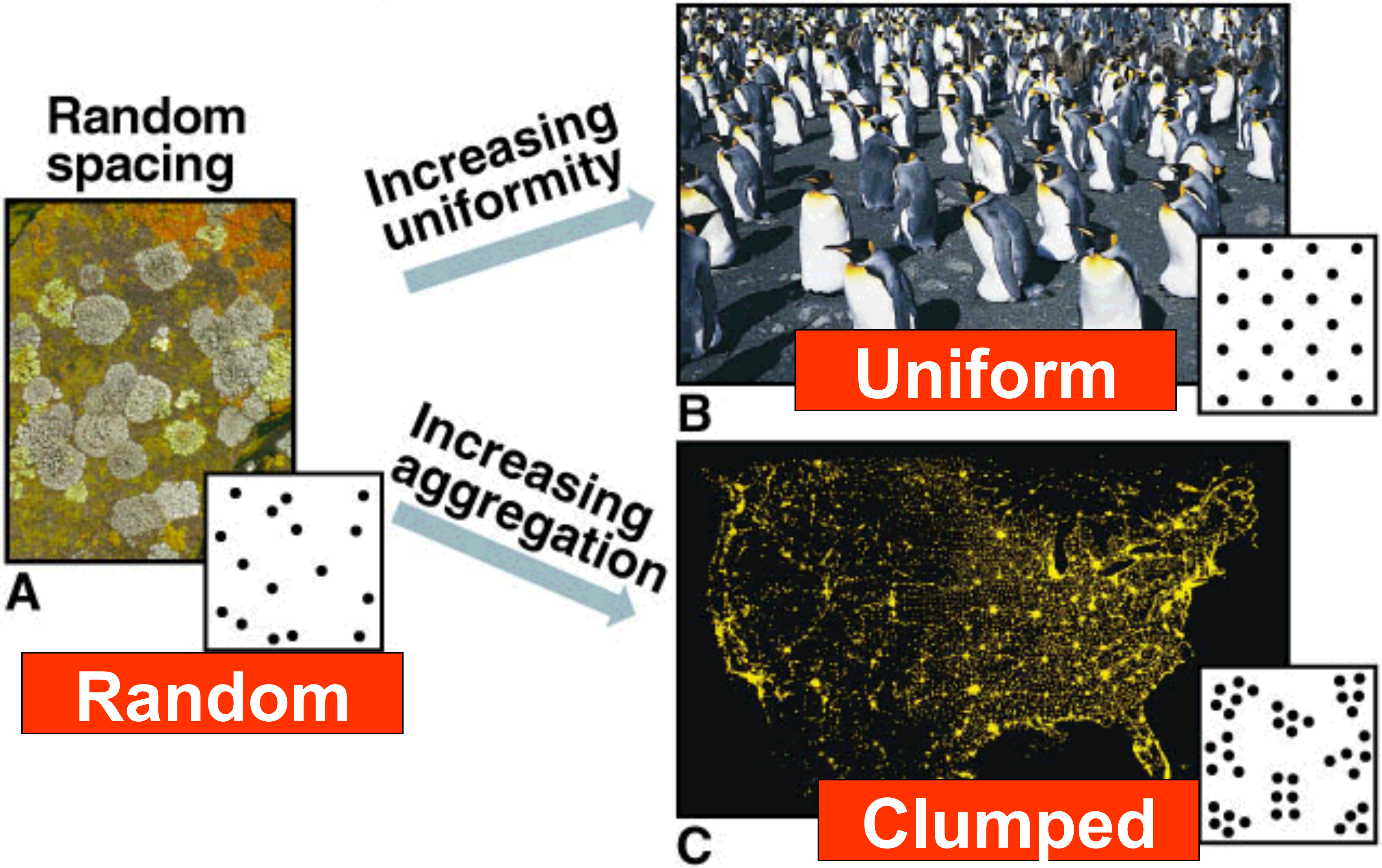


Each group has a different role to minimize competition

Populations co-exist only if each group occupies a different niche

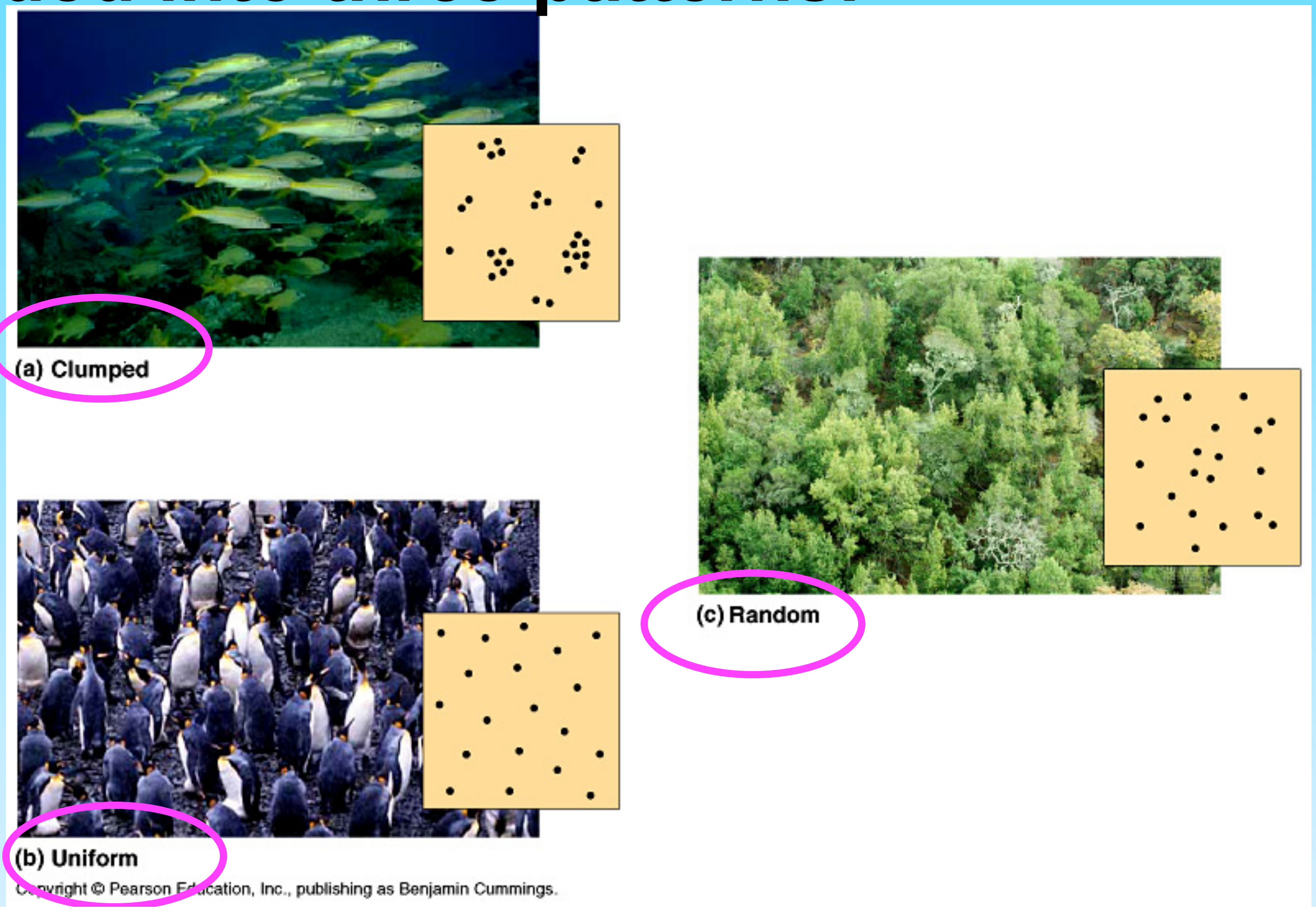


4. Population Distributions



4. Population Distributions

- Determined largely by **habitat preference**
- Divided into three patterns:

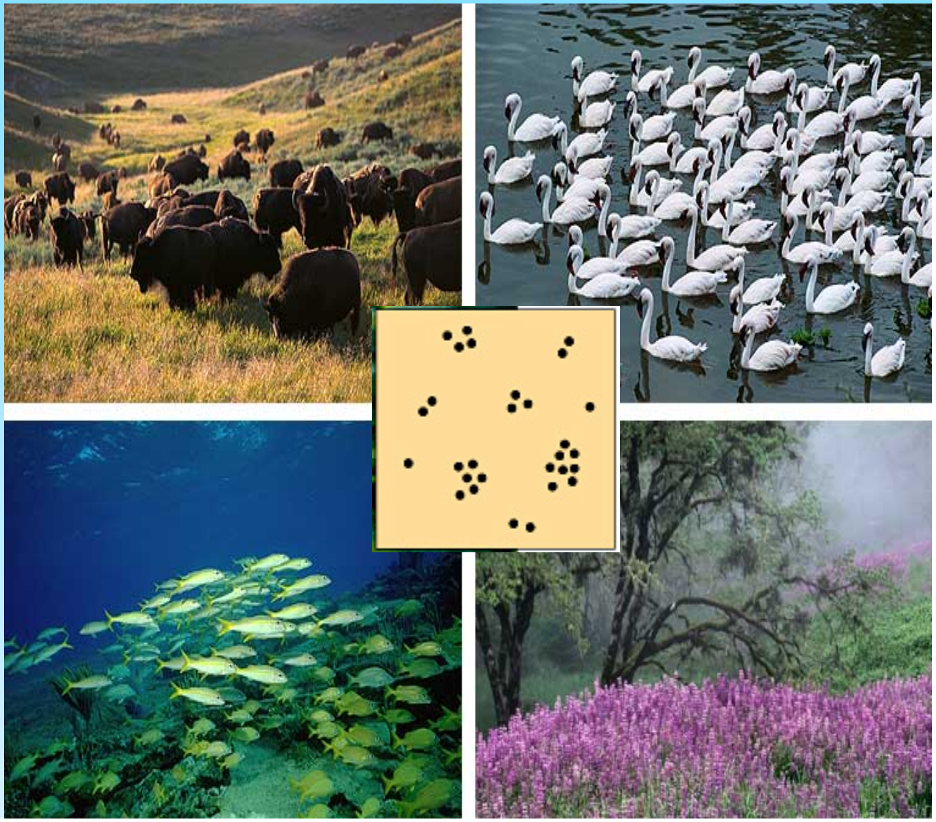


4. Population Distributions

Clumped

- **Most common**
- **Individuals are clustered in patches…like herds**
- **Result of environmental factors and social behaviors**

Ex. Buffalo, geese, fish, seagulls



Name that Clump!!!

Buffalo

Herd

Seagulls

Flock

Geese

Gaggle

Whale

Pod

Fish

School

Wolf

Pack

Lions

Pride

Jellyfish

Smack

Name that Clump!!!

Clams

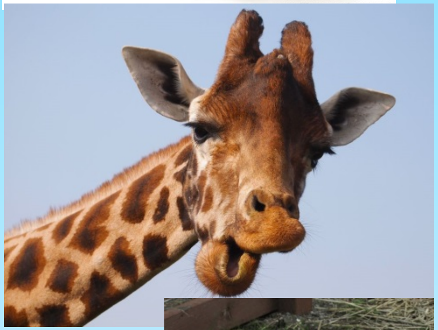
Bed

Crows

Murder

Beaver

Colony



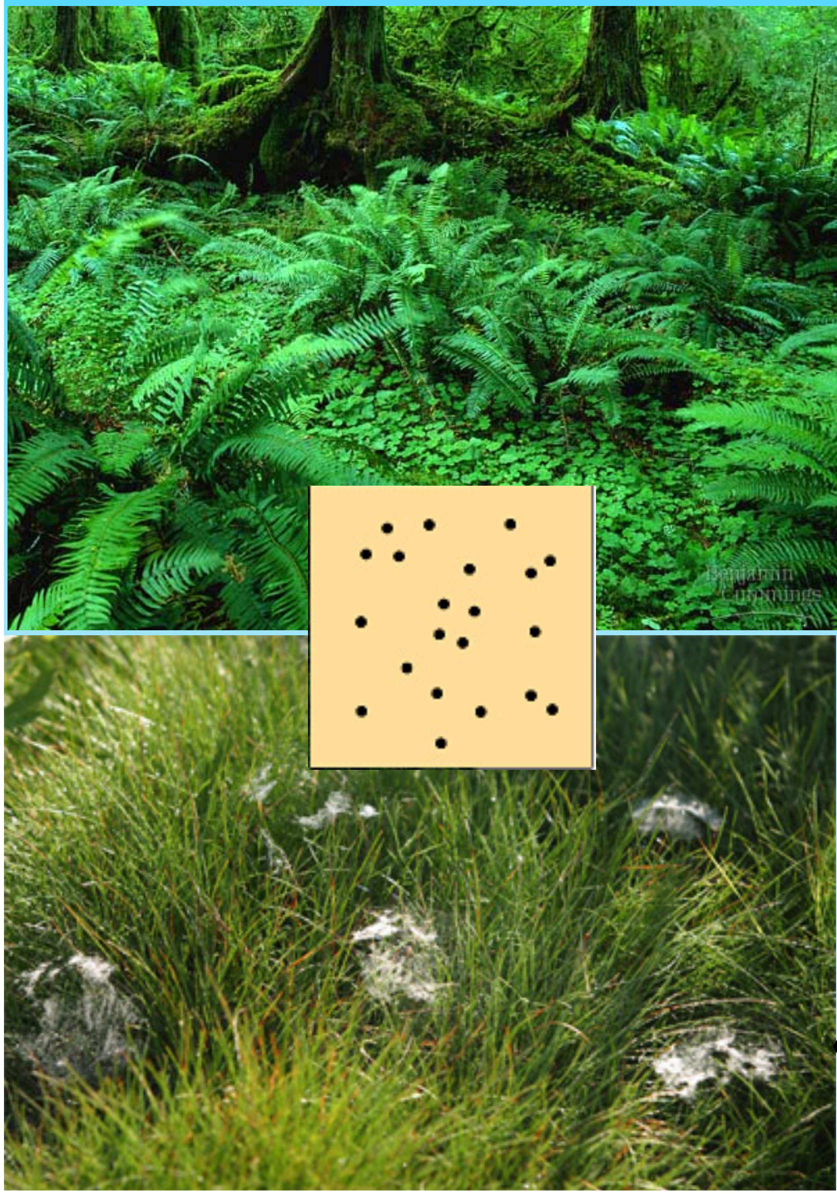
Giraffe

Tower

Hen

Brood

4. Population Distributions



Random

- Not very common
- No attraction nor repulsion among members
- Biotic and abiotic factors have little effect on random distribution
- Abundant resources available

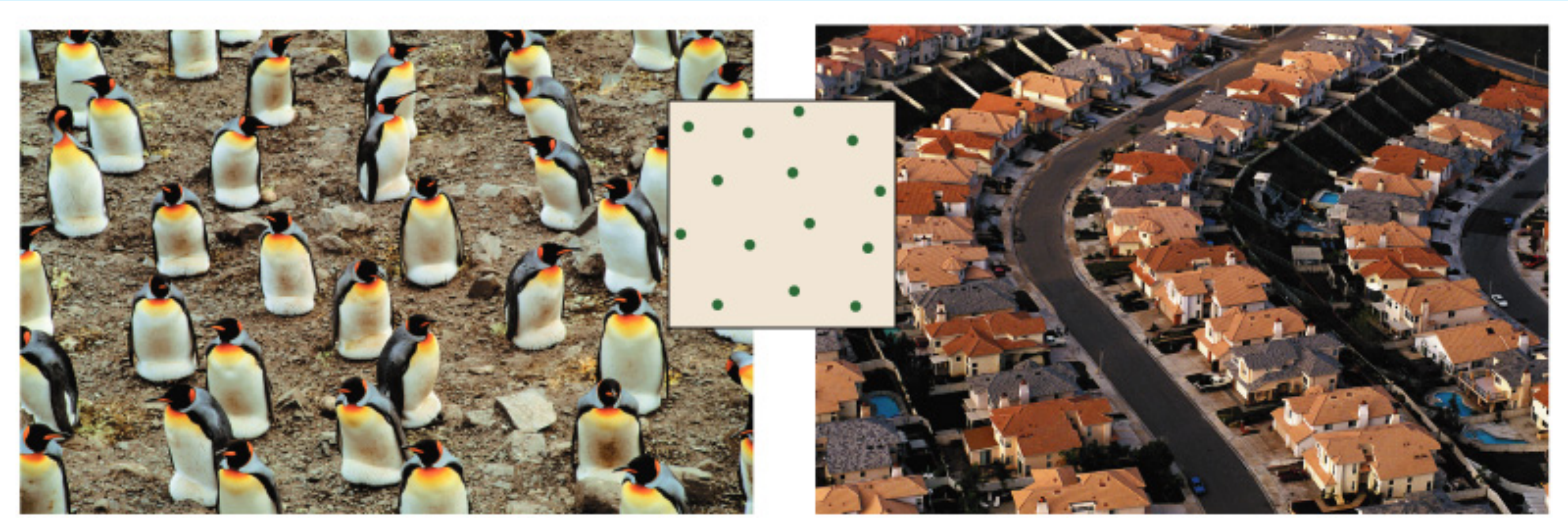
ex. Plants

Spider populations appear to show a random distribution

4. Population Distributions

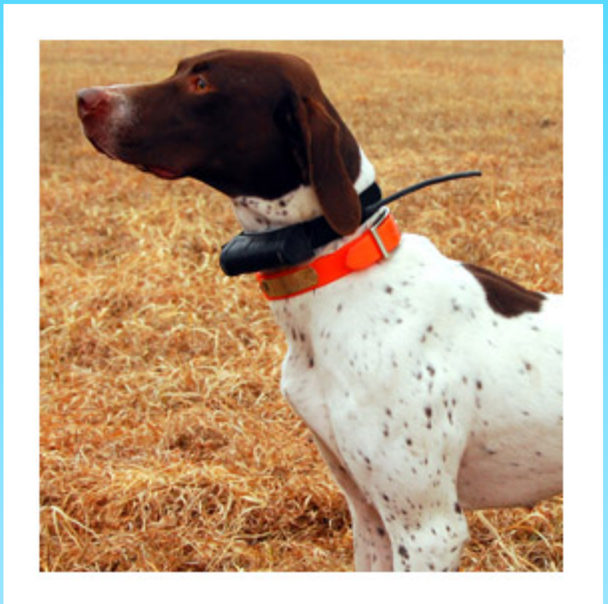
Uniform

- Occurs when there is **competition** among individuals (nutrients, light, space)
- Common in **territorial** species



Technologies to track animals

1. Binoculars
2. Computer
3. Capture, Tag, Recapture
4. DNA analysis
5. Barb-wire fence
6. Camera
7. Scat analysis
8. Radio tracking
9. Satellite tracking



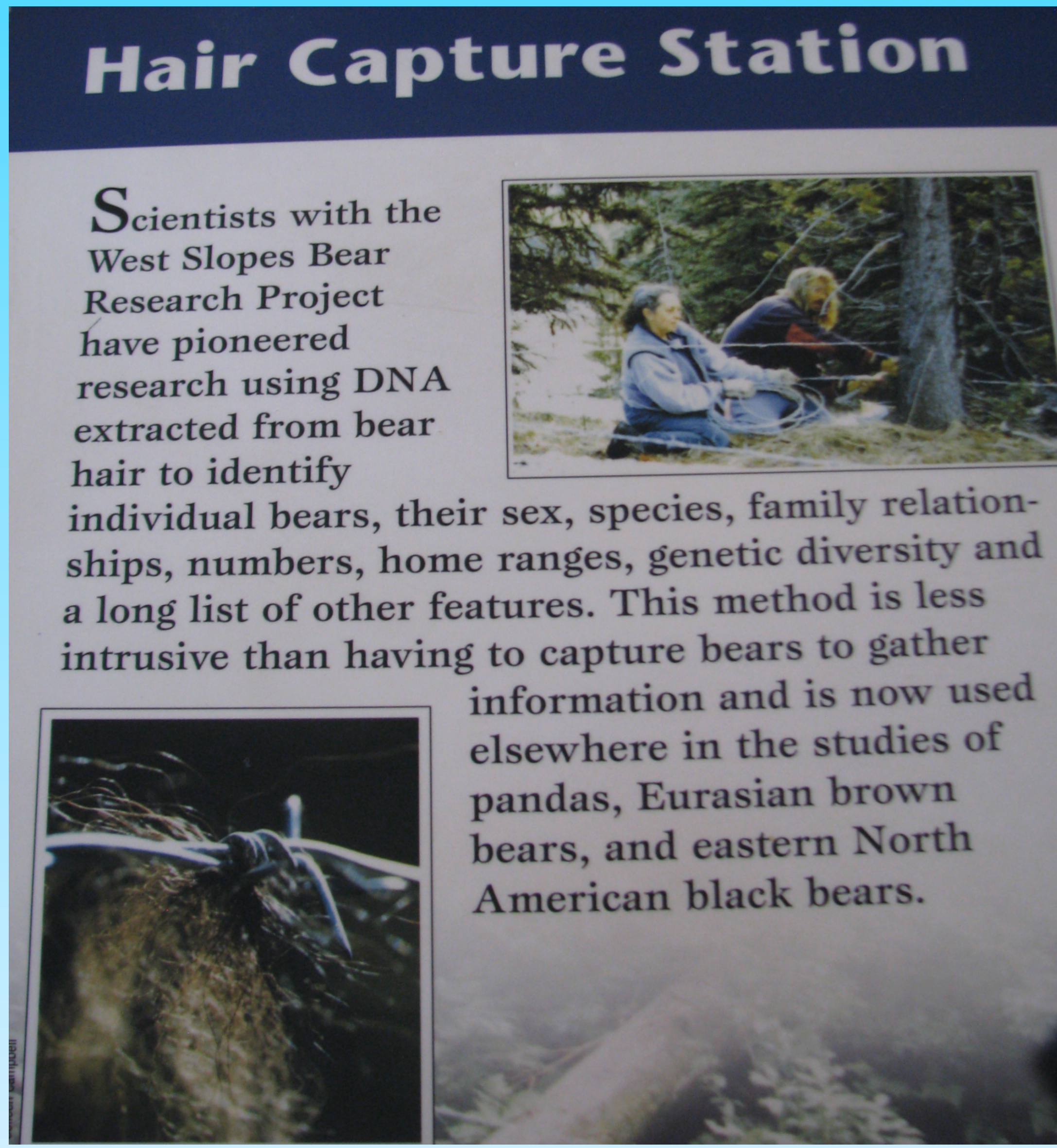
Technologies to track animals

Barb-wire fence

Using trees that grizzlies frequently rub against small samples of bear hair and bear scat can be collected.

The samples are then sent to a laboratory, where DNA fingerprinting technology is applied to identify genetic variation, gender, and relatedness of individual bears.

Technologies to track animals



Wildlife Crossings- Banff

5. Population Size

- Organisms of **same type** in same **place,** at same **time**
- There are **460 students** at JPII during the **2016/2017** school year.
- Can be determined by exact count or estimation!!

6. Population Density

Describes number of organisms in a defined area

- Ex. Number of penguins/km^2

- **Density (D) calculated by dividing total number (N) by amount of area (A) or volume (V) occupied by the population**

Density → $D_p = \frac{N}{A}$ ← Total # of individuals (N); Area (A)

Area: $A = l \times w$

or

$D_p = \frac{N}{V}$ ← Volume (V)

Volume: $V = l \times w \times h$

Density Example 1

There are 80000 snow geese in a 50 hectare area in 1995.

$$D_p = \frac{N}{A}$$

$$D_p = \frac{N}{A} = \frac{80000}{50} = 1600 \text{ geese/ha}$$

Density Example 2

If 200 lemmings are living in a 25 hectare (ha) area of tundra, what is the population density of this area?

$$D_p = \frac{N}{A}$$

$$D_p = \frac{200}{25}$$

D_p = 8 lemmings/ha

Lemmings actually have very poor eyesight and cannot distinguish a small river from a large river… they will often try to cross a large river or fall off a cliff accidentally committing suicide while following their crowd aimlessly…

Based on this myth, the term "lemming" is often used in slang to denote those who mindlessly follow the crowd, even if destruction is the result!!


off the mark
by Mark Parisi
www.offthemark.com
OLIVER, GET BACK HERE! YOU KNOW YOU SHOULDN'T MINDLESSLY PLUNGE TO YOUR DEMISE UNTIL A HALF AN HOUR AFTER YOU'VE EATEN...
OVERPROTECTIVE LEMMING PARENTS
MarkParisi@aol.com


LEMMING
TOUR LINE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YES, SCOTT... IF ALL YOUR FRIENDS JUMP OFF A CLIFF, THEN YOU SHOULD, TOO...
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PARENTING FOR LEMMINGS

Density Problem Example 3

Calculate the population density of shrews per m^2, if an average of 7.8 shrews are found in an area 14 m by 20 m.

Example 3 - Answer

$$D_p = \frac{N}{A}$$

$$D_p = \frac{7.8 \text{ shrews}}{14 \times 20} = \frac{7.8}{280} = 0.03 \text{ shrews/m}^2$$

Example 4 - volume

- If 200.0 ml of pond water contained 52 mosquito larvae, then the density would be:
- Dp = N/A = 52 M.L / 200.0 ml <u>= 0.26 M.L / ml</u>
- This info could be used to

  estimate the size of a

  population of mosquito

  larvae in a given area

Population Growth

Determined by four factors:

1. **Natality (birth)**
2. **Mortality (death)**
3. **Immigration (in)**
4. **Emigration (exit)**

SO…

the amount a population **<u>changes in size</u>** **(+ or -)** can be shown as the following…

$\triangle N$ = (natality + immigration) – (mortality + emigration)

Population Growth

While calculating the change in a population is of great value, scientists are often more interested in the:

GROWTH RATE (gr)

$$gr = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta T}$$

Density Change Example 1

In 1993, the mouse population in my backyard was 50 mice/acre. After three years, various control measures had been in place, and the population dropped to 10 mice/acre. Calculate the rate of density change.

(most recent data first)

$$gr = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta t} = \frac{10 - 50}{3} = \frac{-40}{3}$$

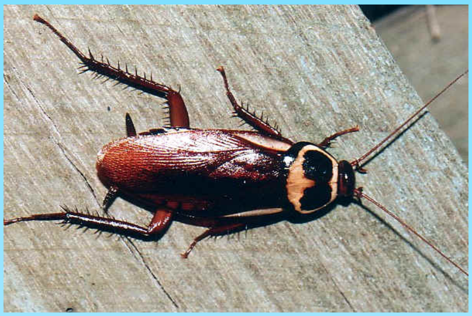
$$= -13.3 \text{ mice/acre/year}$$

Density Change Example 2

When arriving at their summer cabin, the Smiths discovered 10,000 cockroaches roaming throughout their 1000 m^2 cabin. After 1 week, the exterminators were able to control the situation and reduced the cockroach population to 10 per 1000 m^2. Calculate the rate of density change.

$$gr = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta t}$$

(most recent data first)



$$gr = \frac{10 - 10000}{1 \text{ week}} = \frac{-9990}{\text{week}}$$

$$= \frac{-9990}{1000} \text{ cockroaches/1000m}^2\text{/week}$$

$$= -9.99 \text{ cockroaches/m}^2\text{/week}$$

Population Growth Rate and Patterns

- The growth rate is the rate of change over time

Growth rate

$$gr = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta T}$$

Change in pop. size
(most recent data first)

Change in time
(most recent date first)

Rate of growth
(how fast a change
is occuring)

*Note: answer is either + or -

Growth Rate: Example 1

In 1993, the mouse population in my backyard was 50 mice. After three years, various control measures had been in place, and the population dropped to 10 mice. Calculate the growth rate.

IMPORTANT!!!
(most recent data first)

$$gr = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta t} = \frac{10 - 50}{3} = \frac{-40}{3}$$

$$= -13.3 \text{ mice/year}$$

Growth Rate: Example 2

A collared pika population dropped from exactly 25 individuals in 1998 to 5 individuals in 2000. Calculate the growth rate of this population from 1998 to 2000.

$$g.r = \frac{\Delta N}{\Delta t}$$

IMPORTANT!!!
(most recent data first)

$$= \frac{5 - 25}{2000 - 1998} = \frac{-20}{2} = -10 \text{ pika / yr}$$

cgr : per Capita Growth Rate

$$cgr = \frac{\Delta N}{N}$$

Represents a change in population size relative to the initial size

In other words…

Per person, what is the population change?

$$cgr = \frac{(\text{births} + \text{immigration}) - (\text{deaths} + \text{emigration})}{\text{initial \# of organisms}}$$

$$cgr = \frac{(b + i) - (d + e)}{N_i}$$

IMPORTANT!

CGR can be expressed as a decimal or as a percentage.
So…When calculated you will get a decimal (i.e.) .02

To change to a percent multiply by 100. (i.e.) .02 x 100 = 2%

cgr : per Capita Growth Rate

Why use CGR?…here is a comparison…

A population of 2000 individuals that grows by 40 in one year has a CGR of **.020 or 2%**

(so for every individual that is in the population, it grew .02 per individual)

While…

A population of 200 individuals that also grows by 40 in one year has a CGR of **.20 or 20%**

(so for every individual that is in the population, it grew .2 per individual, which is a substantial difference from .02)

CGR Example 1

Using this table, calculate CGR for Sandhill cranes:

Births	Immigration
40	0
Deaths	**Emigration**
55	0

Original Pop = 200

$$cgr = \frac{\Delta N}{N}$$

$$cgr = \frac{(b + i) - (d + e)}{N_i}$$

$$cgr = \frac{(40 + 0) - (55 + 0)}{200} = \frac{-15}{200} = -0.075$$

CGR Example 2

- **Puffins are small marine birds found off the coast of Atlantic Canada. Calculate the per capita growth rate of a puffin colony based on the following population in 1999.**

Orig. pop. = 200 000
Natality = 15 000
Mortality = 10 000
Immigration = 175 000
Emigration = 160 000

$$cgr = \frac{\triangle N}{N}$$

$$cgr = \frac{(15\ 000 + 175\ 000) - (10\ 000 + 160\ 000)}{200\ 000}$$

$$= \frac{190\ 000 - 170\ 000}{200\ 000} = \frac{20\ 000}{200\ 000} = 0.1$$

CGR Calculation Example 3

Calculate the per capita growth rate of a mouse population if the original population size is 34 and over a period of a week, 5 die, 8 are born, 12 immigrate into and 7 emigrate out of the area.

$$cgr = \frac{\Delta N}{N}$$

$$cgr = \frac{(8 + 12) - (5 + 7)}{34} = \frac{20 - 12}{34} = \frac{8}{34} = 0.24$$

Growth Rate Example 4

Over 2 years, a population of 900 experienced 66 births and 14 deaths. Five individuals left the population and 13 individuals joined the population. Using this information, determine the <u>growth rate</u> as well as the <u>per capita growth rate.</u>

$$gr = \frac{\triangle N}{\triangle t}$$

$$gr = \frac{\triangle N = (b + I) - (d + e)}{\triangle t} = \frac{(66 + 13) - (14 + 5)}{2}$$

= 30
Individuals/yr

$$cgr = \frac{\triangle N}{N} = \frac{60}{900}$$

= .067

Dynamic Equilibrium

- Present in mature ecosystems
- Characterized by long term balance
- Pops remain relatively stable over time
- Great biodiversity = stability
- Can be compared with homeostasis



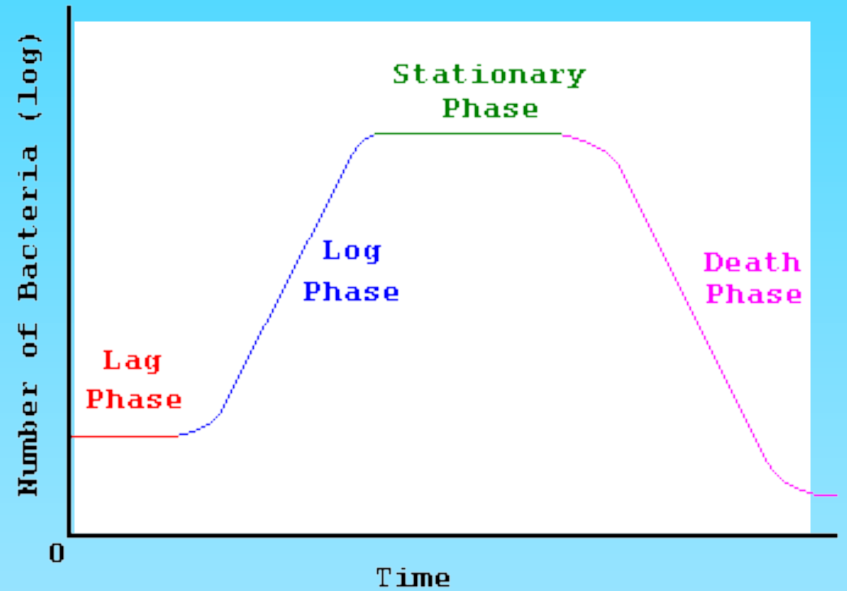
Two population types:

- Open populations:
  - immigration & emigration occurs

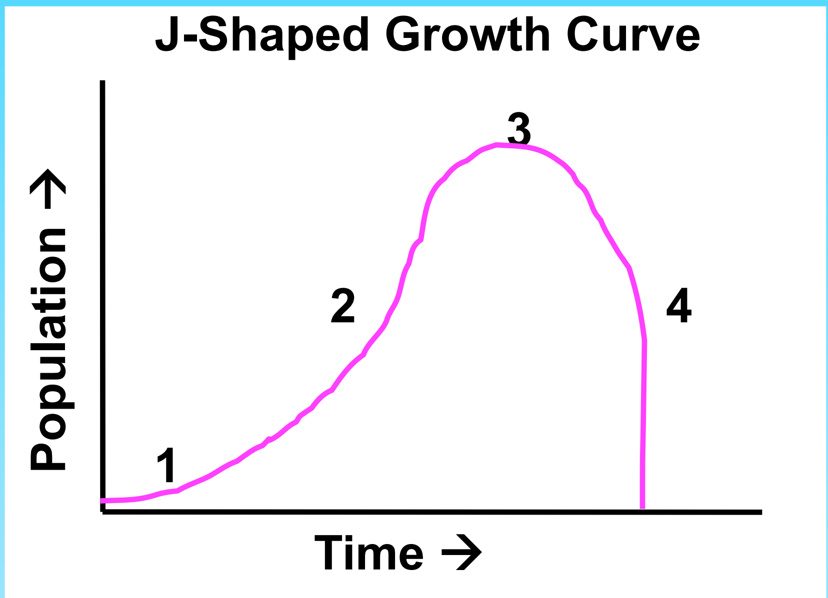
- Closed populations:
  - Density changes are result of natality and mortality only
  - No immigration or emigration
  - eg. Game preserves

Growth Curve

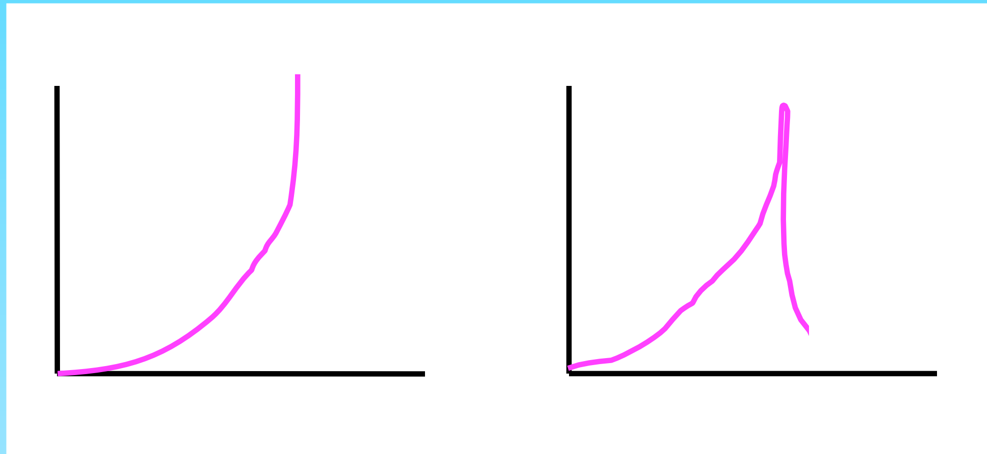
- Graph showing fluctuations in a population over time. These changes can be examined and then analyzed.
- X axis = time (independent or manipulated variable)
- Y axis = density or # of organisms (dependent or responding variable)



Closed Population Growth Curve, Exponential Growth Curve, or J-Shaped Growth Curve



Could also look like these:

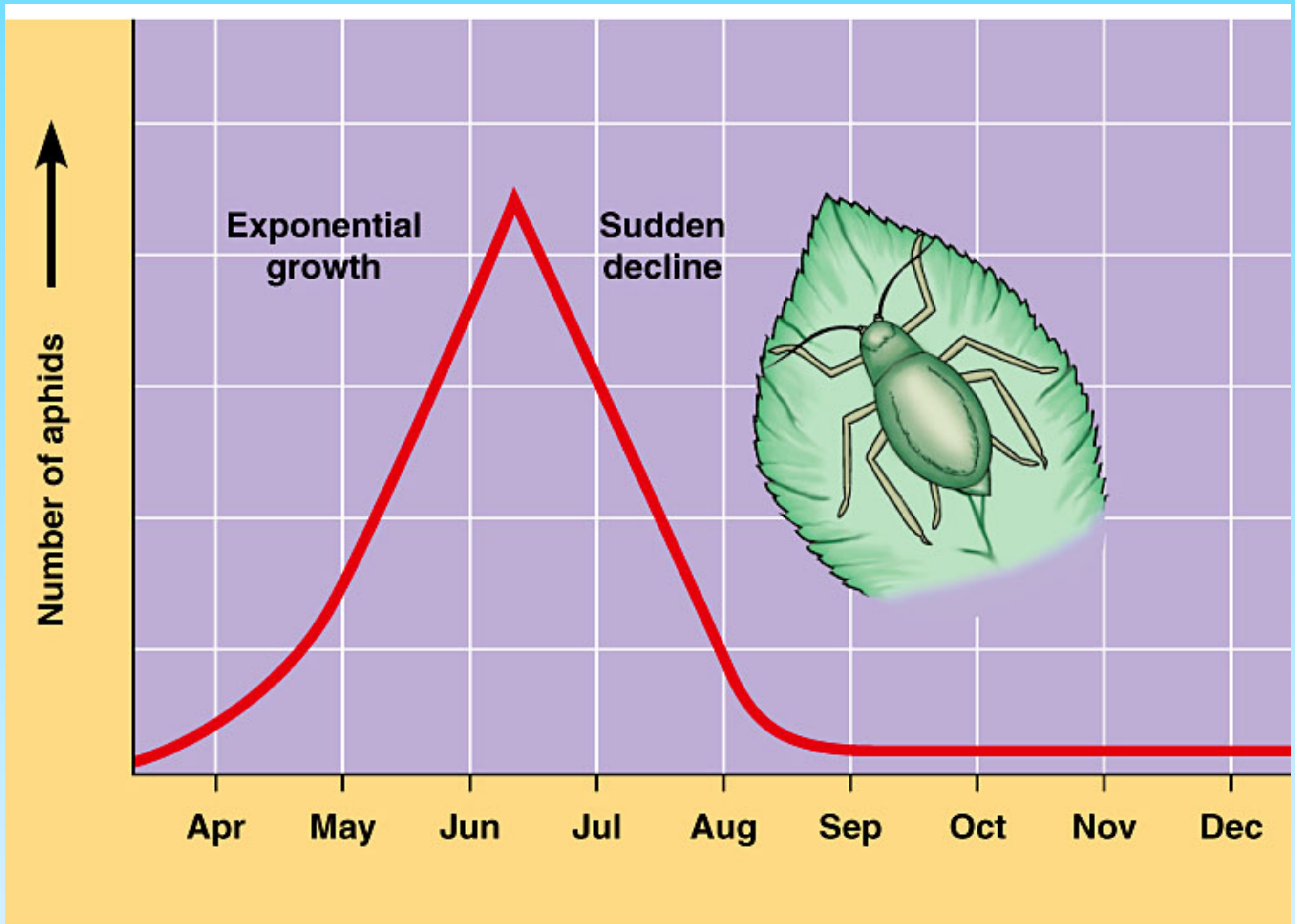


Four phases:

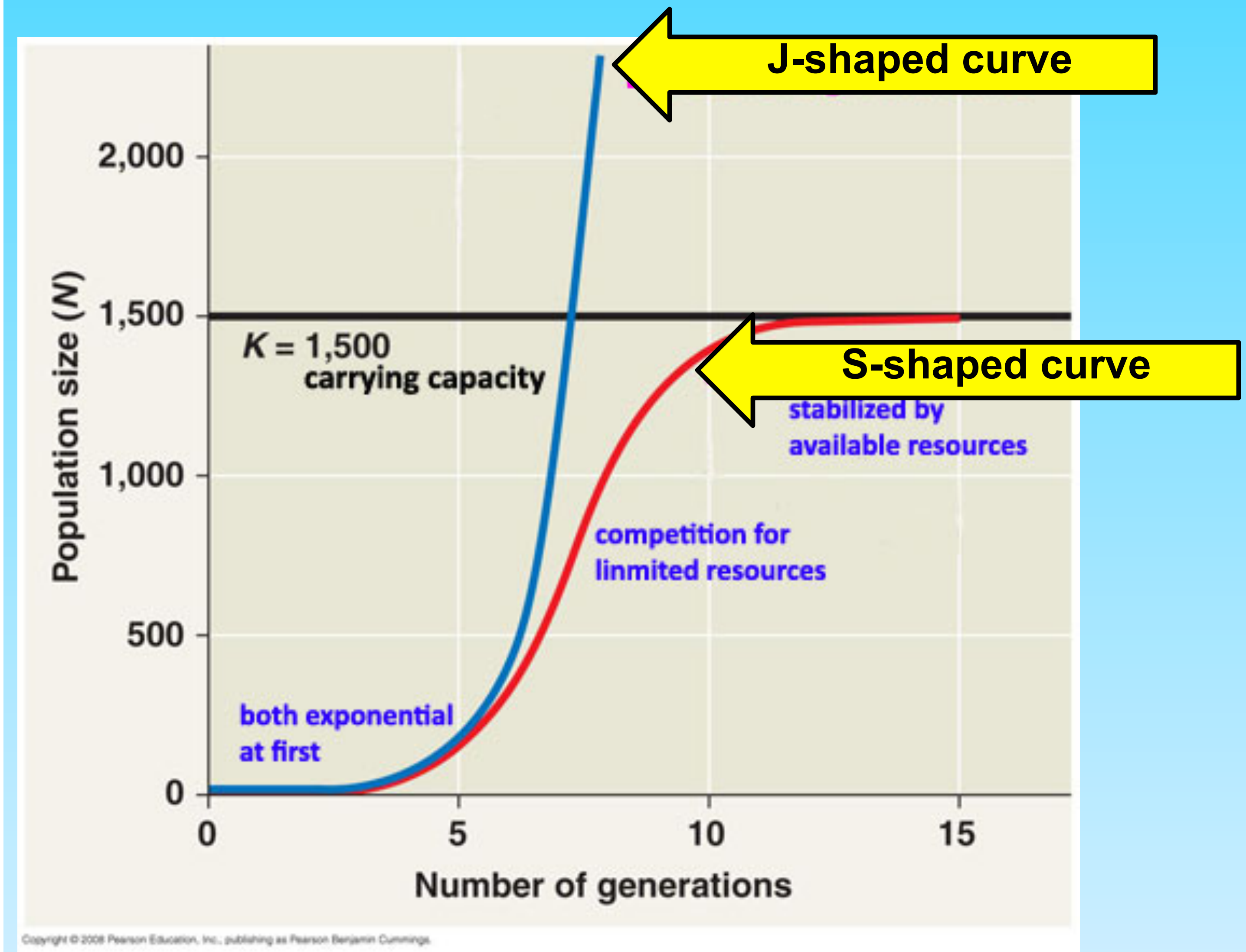
1. Lag – slow; not enough reproducing organisms
2. Growth - exponential
3. Stationary - natality = mortality
4. Death - decline (Not always present)

J- Curve Example

–*Aphids show exponential growth in the spring and then rapidly die off when the climate becomes hot and dry in the summer*



Growth Curve Characteristics

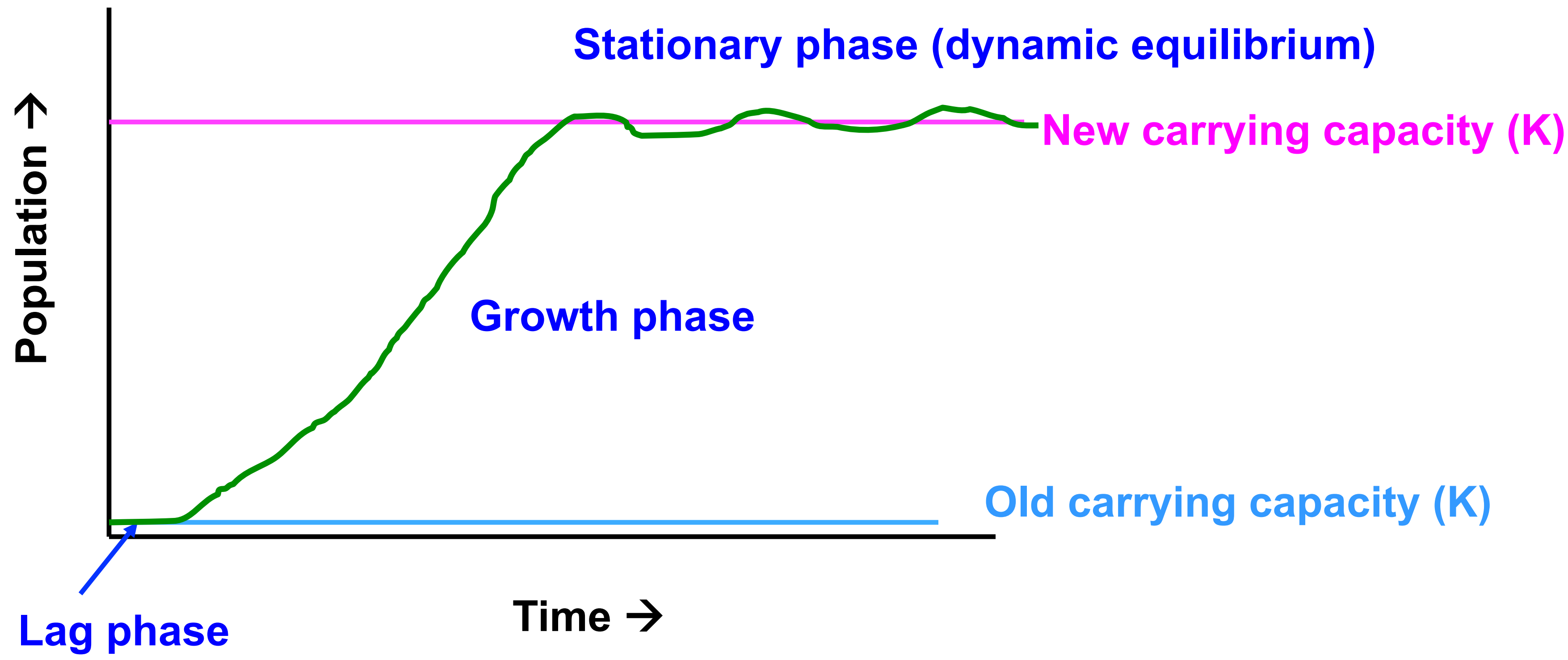


"J-shaped" Growth Curves	vs.	"S- shaped" Growth Curves
■ **Rapid exponential growth** → Rat ■ **r-selected species** ■ Show mass extinction events as resources are exhausted ■ Mostly found in **closed** systems ■ Normally unsustainable in nature		■ **Logistic growth** → Kangaroo ■ **K-selected species** ■ Slowly level off due to competition for limited resources – **dynamic equilibrium** ■ Mostly found in **open** systems

Growth Curve for Open Systems

- When a limiting factor (limited food, water or temperature changes) is introduced to a population, curve results in an "S" shape
- Typical of K-selected species
- As organisms respond to increased nutrients, natality increases.
  - Equilibrium is established again and curve levels off
- New carrying capacity is reached

Open Population Growth Curve,
Logistic Growth Curve, or S-Shaped Growth Curve



Carrying Capacity: The maximum number of individuals an environment can support.

Growth Curve for Open Systems

Open population growth curves represent the dynamic equilibrium that is a result of the balance between:

1. **Biotic potential (stable)**

   (maximum natality under ideal conditions)

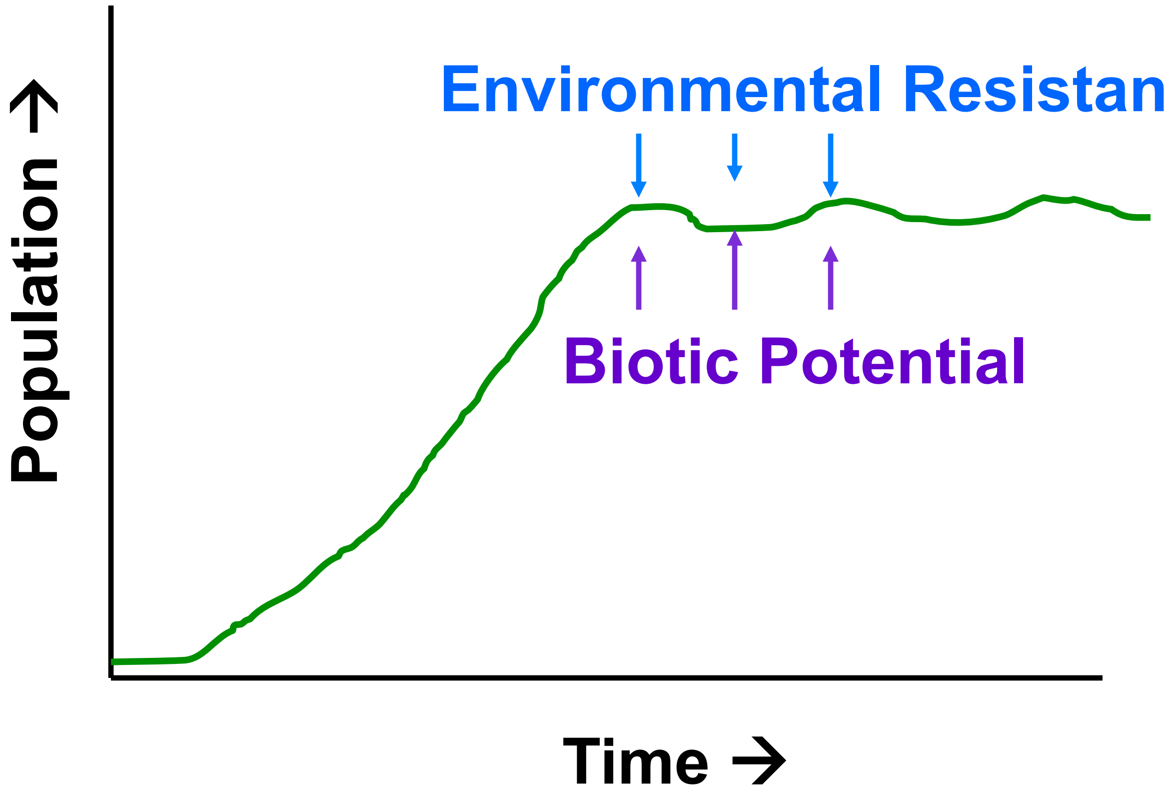
and

2. **Environmental Resistance**

   (biotic and abiotic factors that limit growth)

Open Population Growth Curve

(S-Shaped Growth Curve or Logistic Growth Curve)



Biotic Potential

Maximum number of offspring produced in ideal conditions.

Regulated by:

1. **offspring** - max # of individuals born / birth
2. **survival capacity** – chance that offspring will reach reproductive age
3. **procreation** - # times / year organism reproduces
4. **maturity** - age when reproduction begins

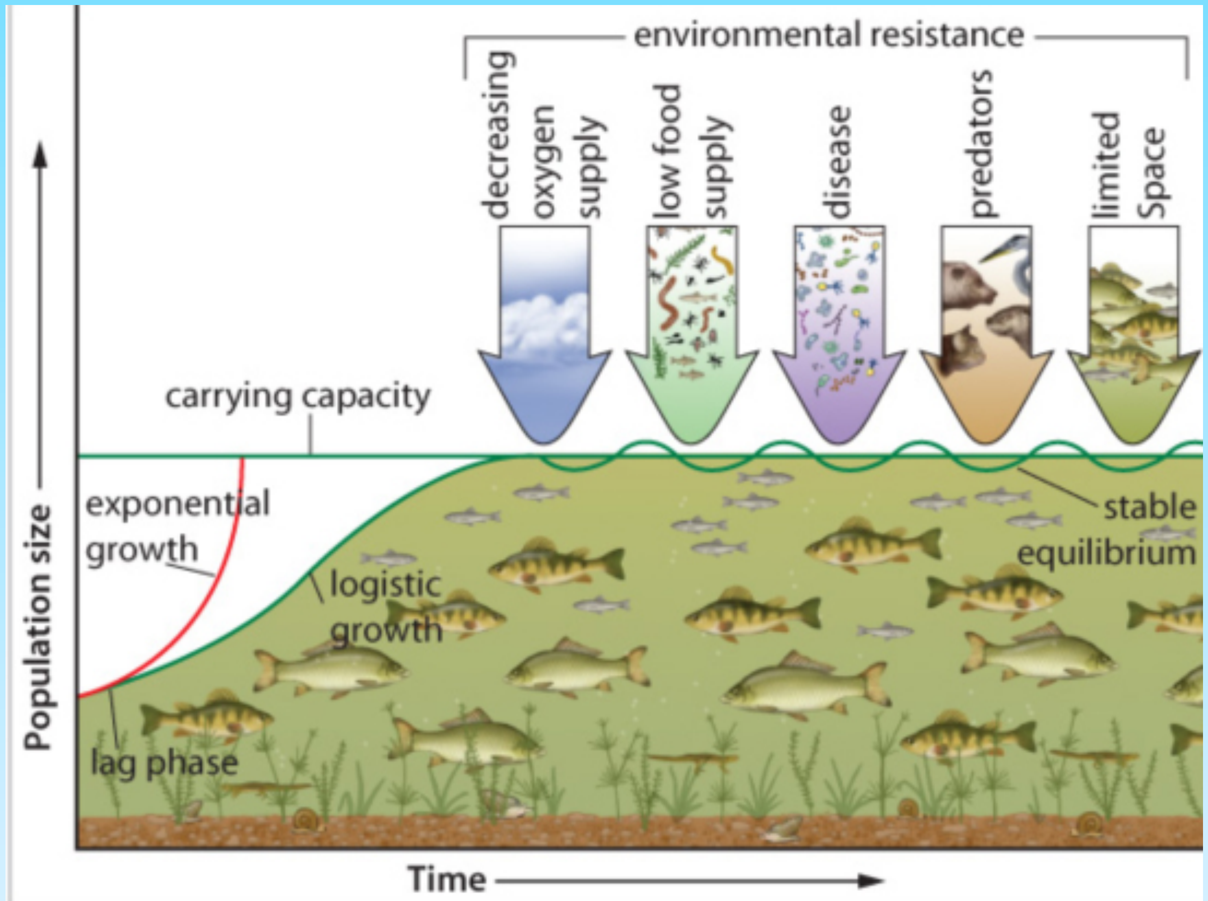
Environmental Resistance

All factors that limit population growth

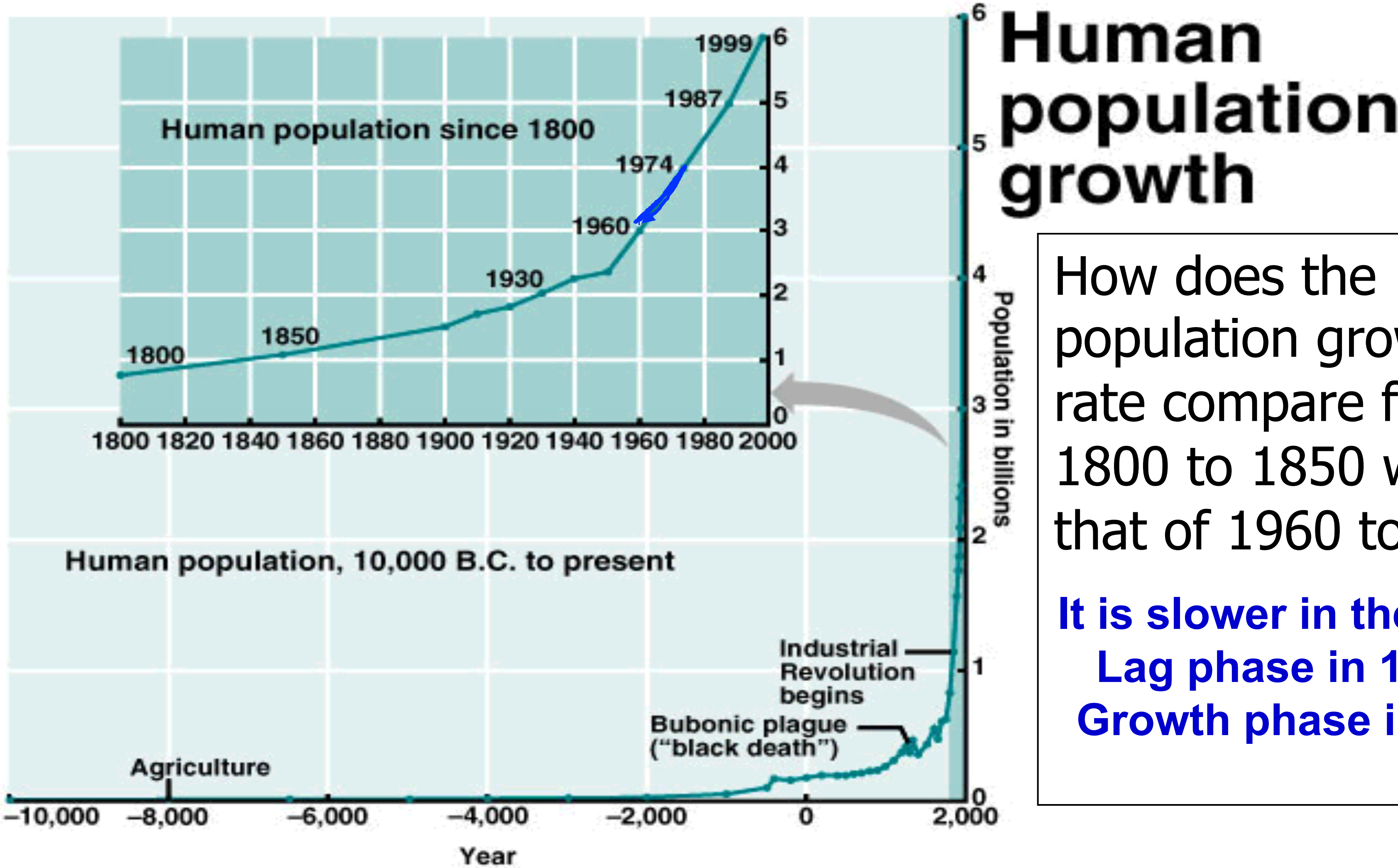
- **Biotic (living) – food, disease, predation, availability of mates**

and / or

Abiotic (non-living) – water, space, natural disasters, sunlight



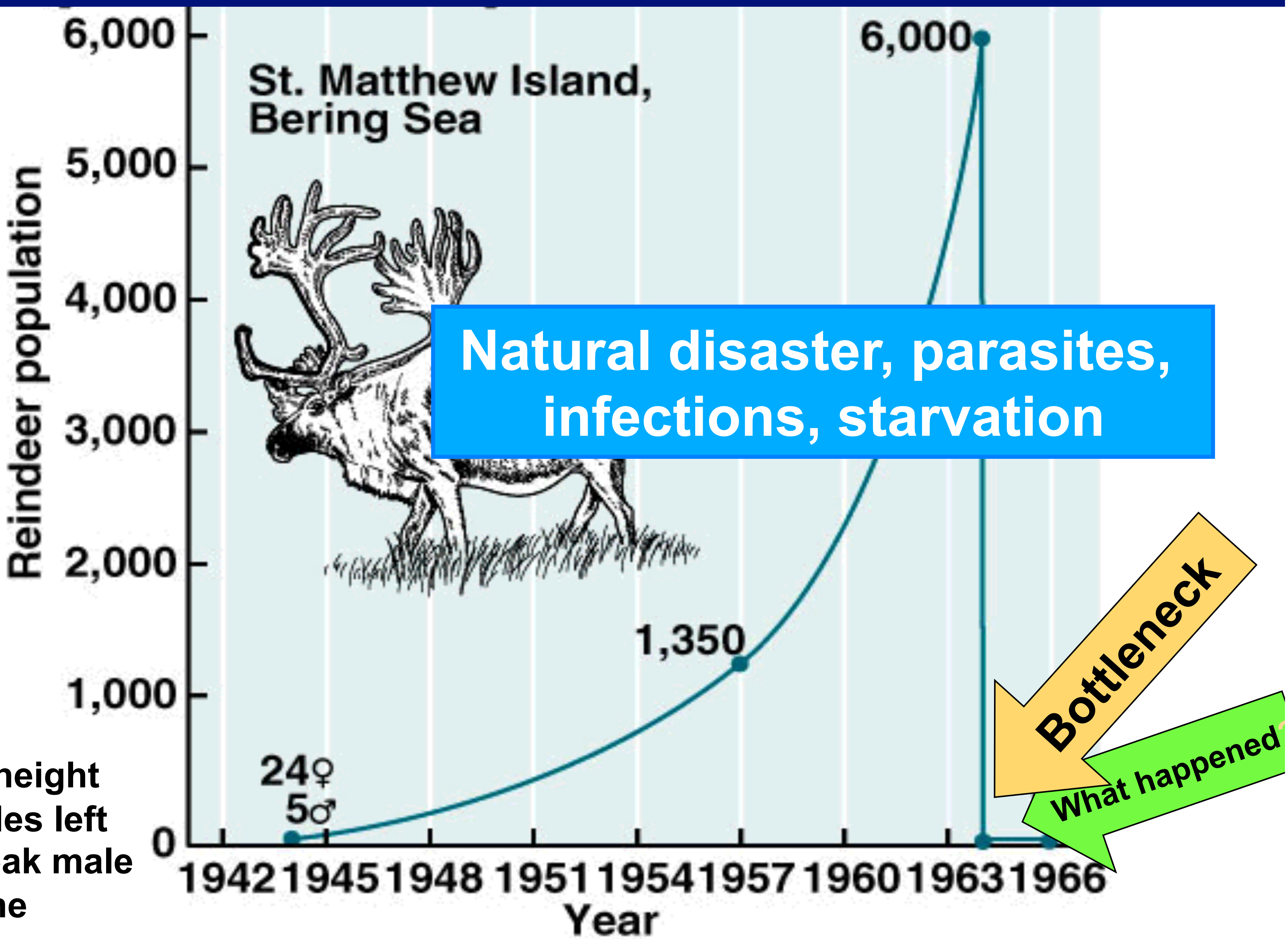
Population Curves



How does the population growth rate compare from 1800 to 1850 with that of 1960 to 1974?

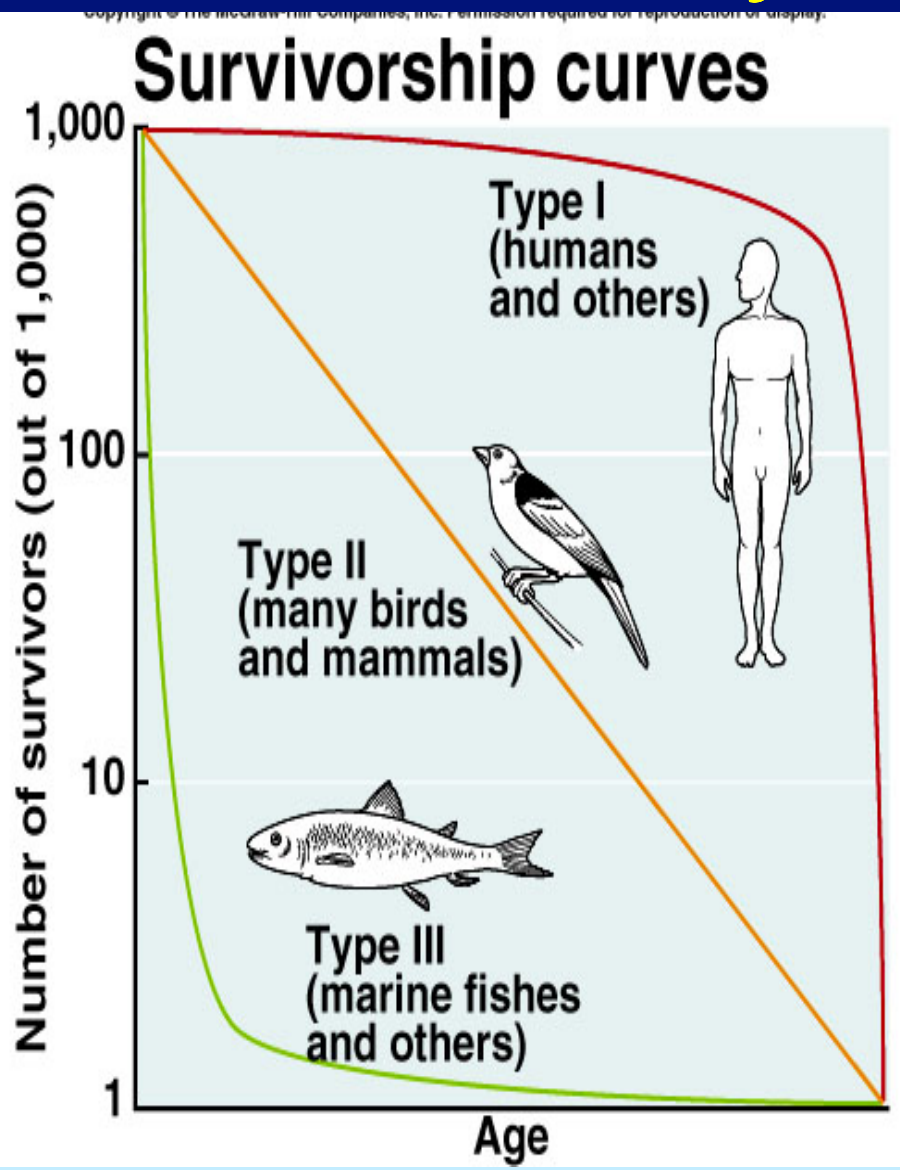
It is slower in the 1800s.
Lag phase in 1800s.
Growth phase in 1900s

Population Explosion & Crashes



-29 total
-6000 at height
-24 females left
& 1 weak male
-now none

What information can you gather from this graph?



1. Which species numbers decrease rapidly at a young age?

Fish

2. Which species tend to live the longest?

Humans

3.Give two reasons for this:

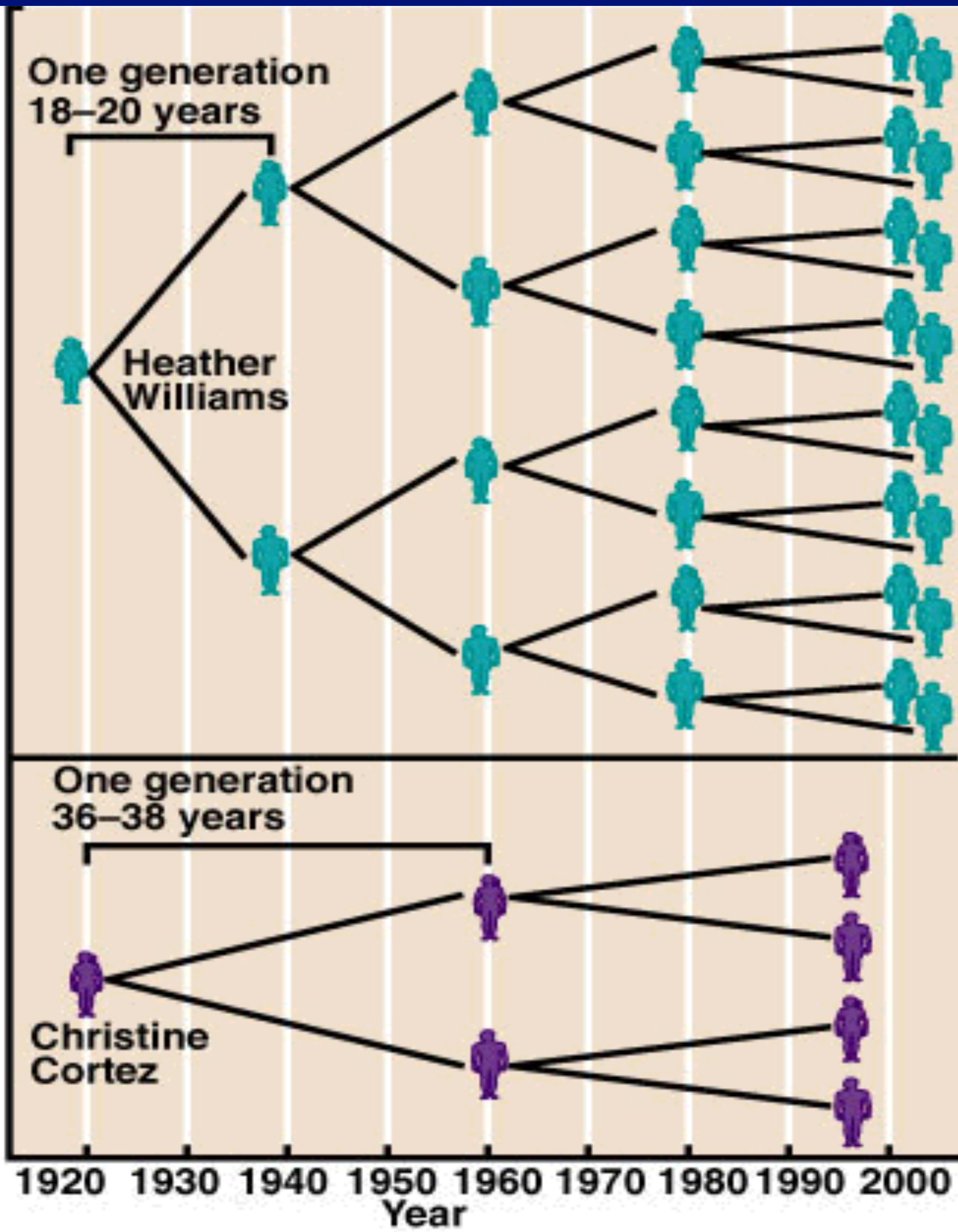
Humans have no predators.

Humans care for their young.

Humans have only 1 or 2 offspring to look after.

Humans have health care.

Population Curves



Who had children when they were 18-20 years old?

Heather Williams

Who waited until they were 36-38 to have children?

Christine Cortez

The younger/older **(circle one)** a person is when they start having children, the **more** offspring they will produce in a quicker time.

Limiting Factors

- Affect population size
  - flood, fire, extreme cold, disease, starvation, predation

Law of the Minimum

  - the substance with the lowest concentration (smallest amount) will limit growth (known as limiting factor)

Limiting Factors can be classified as:

1. Density Dependent:

- <u>Severity is dependent on pop size</u>
  - i.e. bacteria spreads faster in more dense populations
  - i.e. food harder to find with more individuals
- BIOTIC limiting factors
  - disease, starvation, predation

2. Density Independent:

- <u>affects population regardless of # of individuals</u>
- ABIOTIC limiting factors
  - flood, fire, extreme cold…

Populations can be classified as K-selected or r-selected

K - selected

- Long life span
- Late reproductive age
- Low reproductive rate
- Few offspring
- Require parental care
- Large individuals
- near carrying capacity (K)
- Predictable envionments
- Ex. Deer, bears, moose

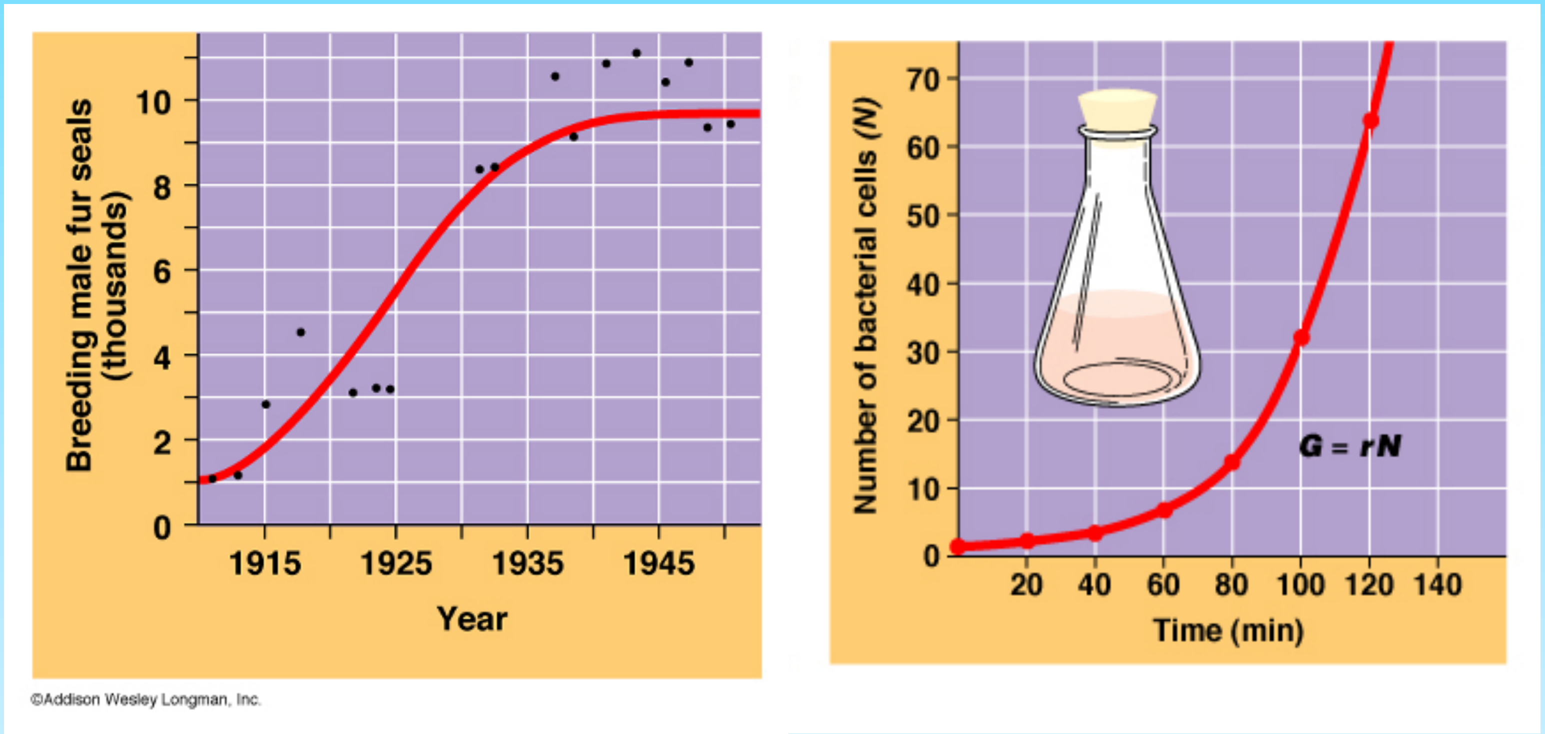
r - selected

- Short lifespan
- Early reproductive age
- High reproductive rate
- Many offspring
- Require little or no parental care
- Small individuals
- Rapidly changing enviornments
- Ex. Bacteria, insects, rodents

K-selected species

r-selected species

- Tend to have an S-shaped growth curve: **logistic growth pattern**
- Tend to have a J-shaped growth curve: **exponential growth pattern**



K-strategists

K-strategists
Large individuals Long life span Slow to mature Few offspring Much care of offspring

© Michio Hoshino/Minden Pictures

r-strategists

r-strategists
Small individuals Short life span Fast to mature Many offspring Little or no care of offspring