

Glossary

aestivation: a state of dormancy during a hot or dry period.

amphipod: aquatic crustaceans, the ancestors of terrestrial leafhoppers which look much the same.

animal: in the broad zoological sense used in this book, any bird, invertebrate, fish, reptile or amphibian.

annual: a plant that lives only long enough to set seed for the next generation, sometimes up to a year but usually less.

artesian waters: underground waters brought up from some depth, used in drier areas as a source of stock and irrigation water, but usually very hard.

biota: collective term for all living things including plants, animals, bacteria and fungi.

bottleneck: a restriction in genetic variability, common in small or isolated groups of plants or animals, and causing 'inbreeding'.

brackish: a mix of fresh and saline waters, in no particular proportions.

capillary: a fine tube or narrow space, through which liquids are drawn upwards through their own surface tension.

catchment: the land surface from which the water to a dam or wetland is collected as runoff.

cloaca: the single opening through which some animals (including reptiles and frogs) mate and excrete.

copepod: tiny, free-swimming, shrimp-like crustaceans with no common name, often abundant and an important food for larger animals in both fresh and saline waters.