**Laboratory 1 – Biology: The Study of Life**

**Introduction**

This exercise sets the stage for the rest of this study Biology is the study of the living.

**Purpose**

To gain a big-picture perspective for the study of biology.

**Procedure**

1. Go outside and to a place where you can observe nature.
2. Take a few minutes to just look at everything around you, then answer the following questions:

**Observations and Questions:**

1. List the living things (plants/animals) that you see in this location:
2. Briefly describe 3 plants and 3 creatures (insects, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, etc). *Use complete sentences so that it is meaningful to whoever reads this report, write in such a way that someone else can picture in their mind what you are describing.*
3. Identify what you could consider to be a keystone species. *This is a life form that if removed would have an effect on the other life forms around it. An example would be a pine tree where squirrels get seeds for food from the pinecones.*
4. Describe why you consider this to be a keystone species.
5. Describe a life form that you see in this area that gets energy by eating plant or animal organisms.
6. Describe a life form that you see in this area that is eaten by another organism.
7. *Dead organisms and waste products have to be broken down so that they can become nutrients for others (such as plants).* Describe which life forms you see or know to be there (some are there even though you cannot see them) that carry out this role. (These are called decomposers —— usually bacteria and fungi).