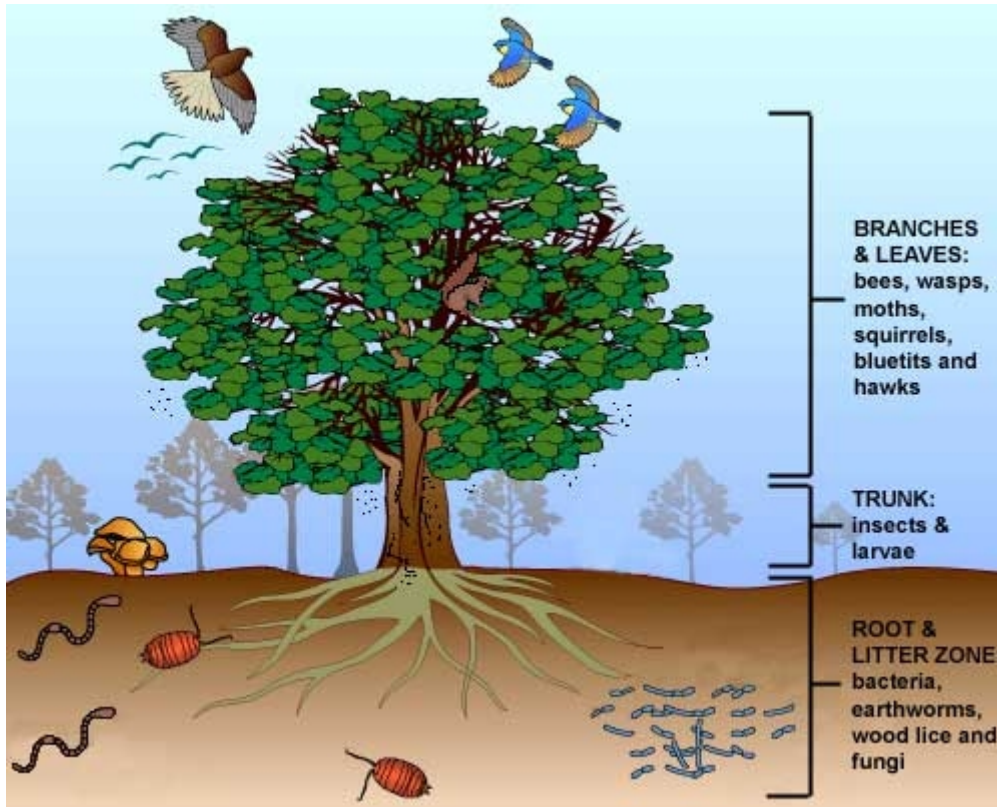


# Niche

- Many organisms have evolved as specialists. They might:
  - Occupy a particular space, climate, micro-climate
  - Exploit a particular time of the year
  - Perform a specialist function
  - Eat a unique food
  - Develop a *symbiotic* relationship with another organism
  - Do all of the above!



An oak tree ecosystem. Each zone of the tree is home to a distinctive community of organisms.

Each of the organisms in this ecosystem has a particular way of fitting into the oak tree environment - they each occupy a **niche** within the ecosystem. For example the blue tits and the squirrels, though they both inhabit the same tree, do not directly compete for food: the squirrels feed on acorns, while the tits feed on moth larvae. The two species *occupy different niches* within the oak ecosystem.