

Nitrogen Vocab

Nitrogen- an element in air and in protoplasm, makes up 78% of atmosphere

Nitrogen cycle- the circulation of nitrogen and its compounds by living organisms in nature; nitrogen in the air passes into the soil where it is changed to nitrates by bacteria.

Amino Acids- organic compounds that combine to form proteins that make up living matter

Atmosphere- the layers of gases that surround the earth; the air

Nitrogen Fixing- combining of nitrogen with other elements to form biologically useful compounds

Legumes- any part of the pea family which bears pods containing a number of seeds; can absorb nitrogen from the air and convert it into nitrates by means of bacteria present in nodules on the roots of plants

Compound- any substance consisting of two or more kinds of atoms chemically combined

Nodules- small swellings on the roots of plants that contain nitrogen-fixing bacteria

Bacteria- a large group of one-celled microscopic plants

Denitrifying- the process by which bacteria changes fixed nitrogen back to gaseous nitrogen, which is then released back into the atmosphere