All organisms have the same basic needs. They must find these things within their environments, or they will die.

**Living things need nutrients and energy.** Nutrients are substances that organisms need to keep healthy and grow. Nutrients are found in foods and in the soil. Organisms also need energy to grow and develop, and to reproduce. Different organisms use different types of energy. Plants use the Sun’s energy to make their own food. The aphids in Figure 2 feed on plants. Spiders and birds eat the aphids. In this way, the Sun’s energy is passed from one living thing to another.

**Living things need water.** Water is the main ingredient of the cells of all living things. You, for example, are about two-thirds water! Without water, you could live for only a few days. Some organisms, such as the cactus in Figure 3, can live in a very dry environment by storing moisture in their stems or leaves.
Living things need air. You, and other organisms that live on land, get oxygen from the air. Fish use oxygen in the water. Marine mammals, such as the orca in Figure 4, come to the surface for oxygen. Green plants use carbon dioxide, water, and sunlight to make food.

Figure 4
The orca breathes air at the surface.

Living things need a habitat, or a place to live. A habitat may be a hole in a tree or an isolated mountaintop (Figure 5). It is a place where an organism has living space and the right conditions, such as nutrients and energy, water, air, and temperature, to survive. Usually, many organisms share a habitat. For example, coral reefs provide a habitat for many plants, animals, and other marine organisms.

Figure 5
The habitat of the mountain goat includes steep cliffs and rocky slopes.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. In your notebook, make a table like the one below. Use what you have learned about the needs of organisms to complete your table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need of organism</th>
<th>Two examples of how organisms meet this need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nutrients and energy</td>
<td>- Plants get energy from the Sun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>habitat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. How do you meet each of the basic needs listed in the table? (For example, you get energy from the food you eat.)