

# Layers of the Forest

The **canopy** is the tallest layer of the forest and can reach heights of 100 feet in Maryland. It receives the most sunlight and wind. The **understory** extends from about 15-20ft above

ground to just below the canopy. Immature and fully grown shade-loving trees grow here. The **shrub** layer extends from about 1 foot off the ground to the understory. Sapling trees,

and many different kinds of spring and early summer flowering shrubs are found here. The **forest floor** is composed of two sub-layers: the herbaceous and ground layers. Ferns,

wildflowers, decomposing leaves and animals, along with fungi and insects; all help to create new soil. A **deciduous forest** is created over time through a process called succession.

