

Carrying Capacity

What determines how large a population gets? ie: the number of rabbits living in the school yard?

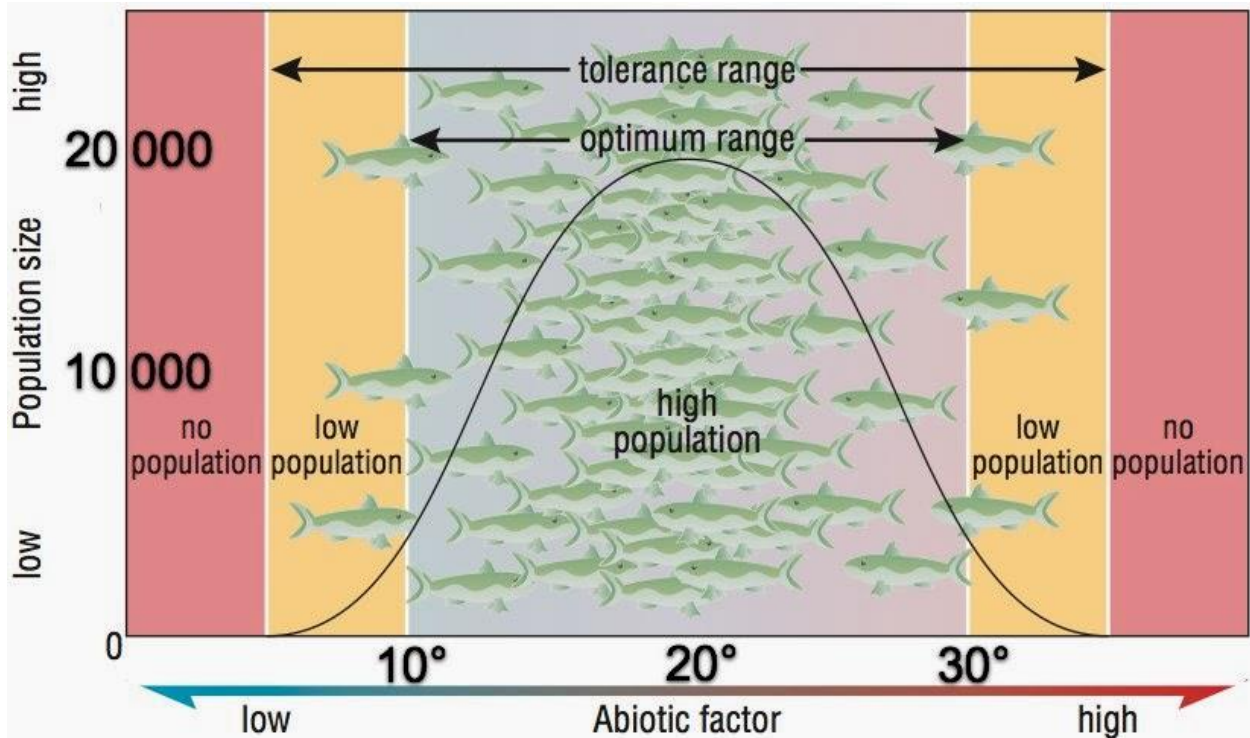
- # predators (hawks, coyotes), amount of food, amount of hiding spots/shelter

Limiting factors = any factor that restricts the size of a population. (ie: # predators, amount of food, amount of hiding spots etc.). These can be biotic or abiotic in nature.

Terrestrial and aquatic organisms have some similar and some different abiotic limiting factors.

- Terrestrial: amount of sunlight, amount of nutrients (in soil), amount of water, temperature
- Aquatic: amount of sunlight, amount of nutrients (in water), temperature, salinity, acidity

We can often graph a 'range of tolerance' graph.



Carrying capacity = the maximum population size of a particular species in a given ecosystem.

- Carrying capacity is affected by these limiting factors!