



7. Can you identify the correct sequence of taxonomical categories?

- (a) Species → Order → Phylum → Kingdom
- (b) Genus → Species → OrderKingdom
- (c) Species → Genus → Order → Phylum

Solution: The correct sequence of taxonomical categories is (c) i.e., Species → Genus → Order → Phylum.

8. Try to collect all the currently accepted meanings for the word 'species'. Discuss with your teacher the meaning of species in case of higher plants and animals on one hand, and bacteria on the other hand.

Solution: Species occupies a key position in classification. It is the lowest taxonomic category. It is a natural population of individuals or group of populations which resemble one another in all essential morphological and reproductive characters so that they are able to interbreed freely and produce fertile offsprings. Each species is also called genetically distinct and reproductively isolated natural population. Mayr (1964) has defined species as "a group of actually or potentially interbreeding populations that are reproductively isolated from other such groups".

In higher plants and animals the term 'species' refers to a group of individuals that are able to interbreed freely and produce fertile offsprings. But, in case of bacteria interbreeding cannot serve as the best criteria for delimiting species because bacteria usually reproduce asexually. Conjugation, transformation and transduction, which are termed as sexual reproduction methods in bacteria, also do not correspond to true interbreeding. Thus, for bacteria many other characters such as molecular homology, biochemical, physiological, ecological and morphological characters are taken into consideration while classifying them.

9. Define and understand the following terms:

- (i) Phylum
- (ii) Class
- (iii) Family
- (iv) Order
- (v) Genus

Solution:

(i) Phylum - Phylum is a category higher than that of Class. The term Phylum is used for animals. A Phylum is formed of one or more classes, e.g., the Phylum Chordata of animals contains not only the class Mammalia but also Aves (birds), Reptilia (reptiles), Amphibia (amphibians), etc. In plants the term Division is used in place of Phylum.

(ii) Class - A Class is made of one or more related Orders. For example, the Class Dicotyledoneae of flowering plants contains all dicots which are grouped into several orders (e.g., Rosales, Sapindales, Ranales, etc.).

(iii) Family - It is a taxonomic category which contains one or more related genera. All the genera of a family have some common features or correlated characters. They are separable from genera of a related family by important and characteristic differences in both vegetative and reproductive features. E.g., the genera of cats (Fells) and leopard (Panthera) are included in the Family Felidae.

The members of Family Felidae are quite distinct from those of Family Canidae (dogs, foxes, wolves). Similarly, the family Solanaceae contains a number of genera like Solanum, Datura, Petunia and Nicotiana. They are distinguishable from the genera of the related family Convolvulaceae (Convolvulus, Ipomoea).

(iv) Order - The category includes one or more related families. E.g., the plant Family Solanaceae is placed in the Order Polemoniales along with four other related families (Convolvulaceae, Boraginaceae, Hydrophyllaceae and Polemoniaceae). Similarly, the animal families Felidae and Canidae are included under the Order Carnivora along with Hyaenidae (hyaenas) and Ursidae (bears).

(v) Genus - It is a group or assemblage of related species which resemble one another in certain correlated characters. Correlated characters are those similar or common features which are used in delimitation of a taxon above the rank of species. All the species of genus are presumed to have evolved from a common ancestor. A genus may have a single living species e.g., Genus Homo. Its species is Homo sapiens - the living or modern man. The Genus Felis has many species, e.g., F. domestica - common cat, F. chaus (jungle cat) etc.

10. How is a key helpful in the identification and classification of an organism?

Solution: 'Key is an artificial analytic device having a list of statements with dichotomic table of alternate characteristics. Taxonomic keys are aids for rapid identification of unknown plants and animals based on the similarities and dissimilarities. Keys are primarily based on stable and reliable characters. The keys are helpful in a faster preliminary identification which can be backed up by confirmation through comparison with detailed description of the taxon provisionally identified with. Separate taxonomic keys are used for each taxonomic category like Family, Genus and Species.

11. Illustrate the taxonomical hierarchy with suitable examples of a plant and an animal.

Solution: The arrangement of various taxa in a hierarchical order is called taxonomic hierarchy. The hierarchy indicates the various levels of kinship. The number of similar characters of categories decreases from lowest rank to highest rank. The hierarchical system of classification was introduced by Linnaeus.

The hierarchy of major categories is:

Species → Genus → Family → Order → Class

Kingdom → Phylum or Division

Increasing specificity → Decreasing specificity

Classification of a plant (Wheat):

Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Angiospermae
Class	Monocotyledonae
Order	Poales
Family	Poaceae
Genus	Triticum

Species	aestivum
---------	----------

Classification of an animal (Housefly):

Kingdom	Animalia
Phylum	Chordata
Class	Insecta
Order	Diptera
Family	Muscidae
Genus	Musca
Species	domestica

***** END *****