Vocabulary List for Terwilliger Nature Van:

The following terms are commonly used in Nature Van presentation, with the most common being listed first. Not all of the words will be used during each presentation. Each program is geared to the level of knowledge of the students present. The teacher can assist the van naturalist by telling them how much, if nay, of this vocabulary the students have studied prior to the van visit. This list may be duplicated and distributed to schools.

Habitat:	The place where an animal lives.
Wildlife:	Wild animals; animals that do not depend on people for survival as domesticated animals do.
Nature:	Everything not made by people.
Adaptation:	Something about an animal's body or behavior that helps it to survive in its environment.
Herbivore:	An animal that eats plants.
Carnivore:	An animal that eats other animals (meat).
Omnivore:	An animal that eats both plants and animals.
Predator:	An animal that kills and eats other animals.
Prey:	An animal that is killed and eaten by a predator.
Environment:	Surroundings.
Organism:	Any living thing.
Ecology:	The study of the relationship between organisms and their environment.
Biology:	The study of life.
Species:	A particular kind of organism. Mating or reproduction is usually possible only between members of the same species.
Waterfowl:	Water birds with webbed feet and flattened bills, such as ducks, geese and swans.
Raptor:	A predatory bird such as an owl, hawk, falcon or eagle.
Perching birds:	Birds with toes adapted to perching on branches. They are the largest group of birds and include most common small birds such as jays, sparrows, finches, robins, blackbirds, etc.
Rodent:	A gnawing mammal such as a mouse, squirrel or gopher.
Marsupial:	A pouched mammal.
Cold-blooded:	Animals whose body temperature is the same as their environment

Warm-blooded:	Animals with fur, feathers or blubber to keep their body temperature the same when the temperature of their environment changes.
Vertebrate:	An animal with a backbone.
Invertebrate:	An animal without a backbone.
Arthropod:	An animal with jointed legs. This is the largest group of invertebrates and includes insects, spiders, crabs and centipedes.
Natural resource:	Anything in the natural environment that is used by people, such as water, forests, wildlife, minerals, etc.
Conservation:	The wise use of natural resources.
Pollution:	Putting something into an environment that is harmful to the organisms living there.
Extinct:	A species that has died out completely.
Endangered Species:	Species that are likely to become extinct unless action is taken to save them.
Competition:	A struggle between organisms for anything that they need to survive that is in limited supply, such as food, shelter, mates, etc.
Parasite:	An organism that feeds on another organism, usually without killing it.
Host:	An organism on which a parasite feeds.
Producers:	Green plants that change energy from the sun into food.
Consumers:	Organisms that get food from producers or other consumers.
Decomposers:	Organism s that get food from dead organisms.
Photosynthesis:	The process by which producer organisms use the sun's energy to convert air and water into sugar (food).
Nutrient:	Things that organisms need to survive which are found in the soil or water or within other organisms.
Niche:	The role an organism in its environment, including its habitat, food and behavior.
Domesticate:	To take an organism out of its natural habitat and raise it for food or fiber, as has been done with cows, chicken, corn, cotton, etc.
Symbiosis:	Different types of organisms living close together. The types of symbiosis are predation, competition, parasitism, mutualism and commensalism.
Mutualism:	A type of symbiosis in which both species benefit.
Commensalism:	A type of symbiosis in which one species benefits and the other species is neither benefitted nor harmed.