



Vocabulary

- Taxonomic rank and biological classification

Main Concept: Orchids are the largest family of flowering plants, and have very small seeds.

Age/Grade level: Elementary School students

Learning Goals:

- Students will understand how large the Orchid family is and how small the Orchid seed is.

What you'll need:

- Orchid, mammal, fish, bird, reptile, and amphibian family images
- Chart illustrating number of species in family
- Picture of Orchid seed pod
- Coconut seed*
- Avocado seed*
- Peach seed*
- Mustard seed*

*Starred items are not included in the activity packet.

Preparation:

- Use scissors to cut out along the dotted line the family images and the numbers



Activity:

- **Are you familiar with how living things are classified?**

Take a look at the biological classification taxonomic rank. This is used to classify living things.

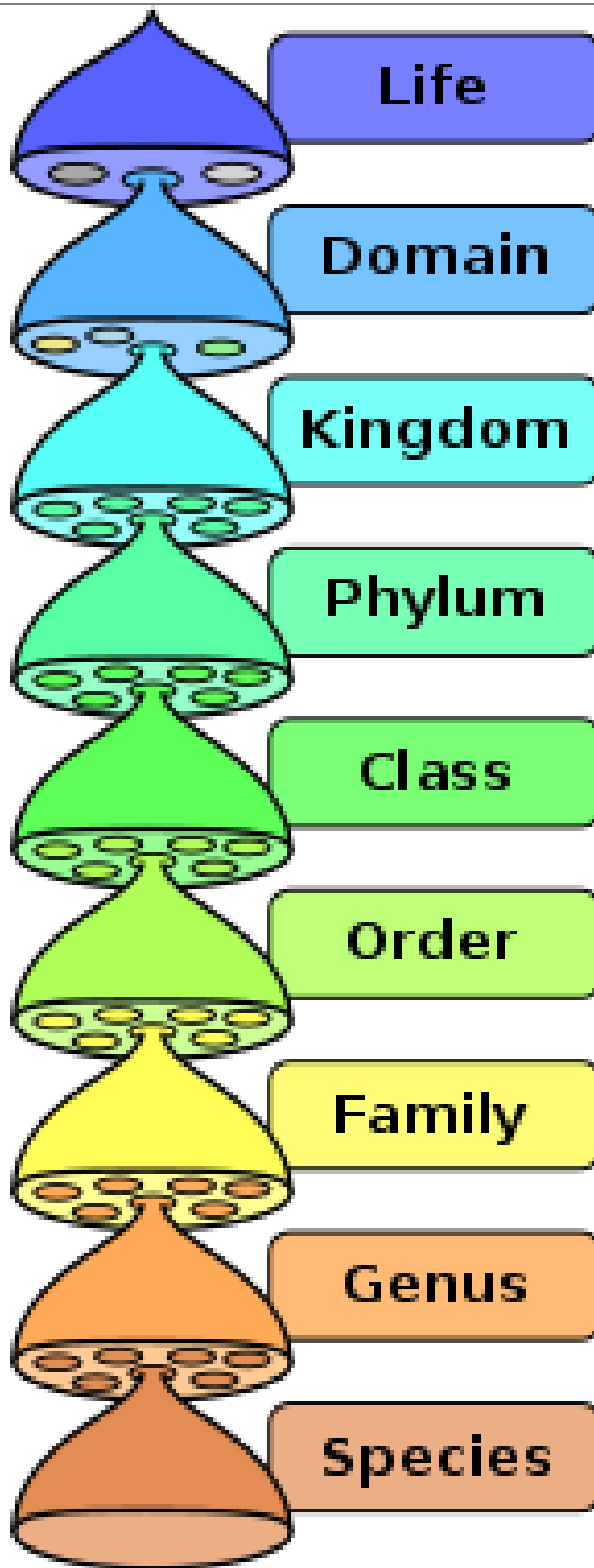
- **Do you know how large the Orchid family is?**

Orchids are the largest family of flowering plants. There are approximately 25,000 species of orchids that occur naturally. That is more than twice the number of bird species and four times the number of mammal species.

Take a look at the pictures of the Orchids, Mammals Fish, Birds, Reptiles, and Amphibians, and Mammals. Can rank the families in order from largest to smallest by matching the pictures with the numbers?

- **Do you know how small an Orchid seed is?**

Orchids have very small seeds, and can have over 1 million seeds in a single seed pod. Certain epiphytic orchids of the tropical rain forest produce the world's smallest seeds, up to 35 million per ounce. If you lined them up end to end it would take 300 seeds to make an inch. Examine the picture of the Orchid seed pod. Compare the size of the orchid seed to the coconut seed, avocado seed, peach seed, and jar of mustard seed.



Family	Number of Species in the Family
Fish	32,000
Orchid	26,049
Bird	10,000
Reptile	8,700
Amphibian	6,500
Mammal	5,676



Fish



Orchids



Birds



Reptiles



Amphibians



Mammals

1

2

3

4

5

6

Orchid seeds and seed pod

