

Symbiosis is any type of a close and long-term biological interaction between two different biological organisms, be it mutualistic, commensalistic, or parasitic. The organisms, each termed a symbiont, may be of the same or of different species. In 1879, Heinrich Anton de Bary defined it as “the living together of unlike organisms”. The term was subject to a century-long debate about whether it should specifically denote mutualism, as in lichens; biologists have now abandoned that restriction.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:51**

