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Q20

In the nature, which of the following is/are most likely to be found surviving on a surface without soil? 1. Fern 2. Lichen 3. Moss 4. Mushroom Select the correct answer using the code given below (a) 1 and 4 only (b) 2 only (c) 2 and 3 (d) 1, 3 and 4
Official key: C.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2021 · General Studies · 2 marks · Environment and Ecology
Environment, ecology, climate, biodiversity - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation**(a)**

1 and 4 only. Ferns and mushrooms usually want soil or wood; lichens and mosses colonise bare rock.

(b)

2 only. Mosses also live on rock and bark.

(c) Official key

2 and 3. **Lichen** and moss on rock, bark, walls - little or no soil. Fern and mushroom generally need a substrate of soil or dead wood.

(d)

1, 3 and 4. Fern and mushroom are the misses.

Summary

Official key is (c) 2 and 3. Lichens and mosses pioneer bare surfaces. Ferns and mushrooms typically need soil or decaying organic matter.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Lichen

Fungus + alga/cyanobacterium; rock coloniser.

Pioneer succession

Bare rock → lichen/moss → soil.