

Relationships and Ecosystems

Wetlands

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Grade range: 5th

What you need: pencil, activity guide

Wetlands are important habitats for many plants and animals to live. The Clark County Wetland Park is home to many different organisms that would not be able to live in the desert if not for the water that the wetlands give them. All of these animals are connected to each other through the habitat they live in.

Even though all of the animals live in the same habitat, they have different ways of getting energy from their food. Some animals, called **producers**, make their own food to survive (live). Most plants are producers since they make their food using energy from the sun. Another way **organisms** (living things) get energy is by eating other living things, these are called **consumers**. A consumer can be any type of animal that eats either plants or other animals. The last way organisms get energy is by breaking down dead things, these are called **decomposers**. Decomposers can be fungus, bacteria, or insects.

New Words

Wetland: The place where organisms live that has dry and wet places.

Organism- Any living thing.

Food chains: shows how energy transfers (moves) in a system.

Producers: Living things that make their own food.

Consumers: Living things that eat other living things to survive.

Decomposers: Living things that break down dead matter to survive.

Photosynthesis: making food using energy from the sun.

Making Food Chains

Look at the pictures below and complete the sentence to describe how the organism gets their energy.



Golden Eagles get energy from eating _____.



Mosquitofish get energy from eating _____.



The Narrowleaf plant gets energy from _____.



Bobcats get energy from eating _____.



Black-tailed Jackrabbits get energy from eating _____.



Black-chinned hummingbirds get energy from eating _____.



Field Cockroaches get energy from eating _____.

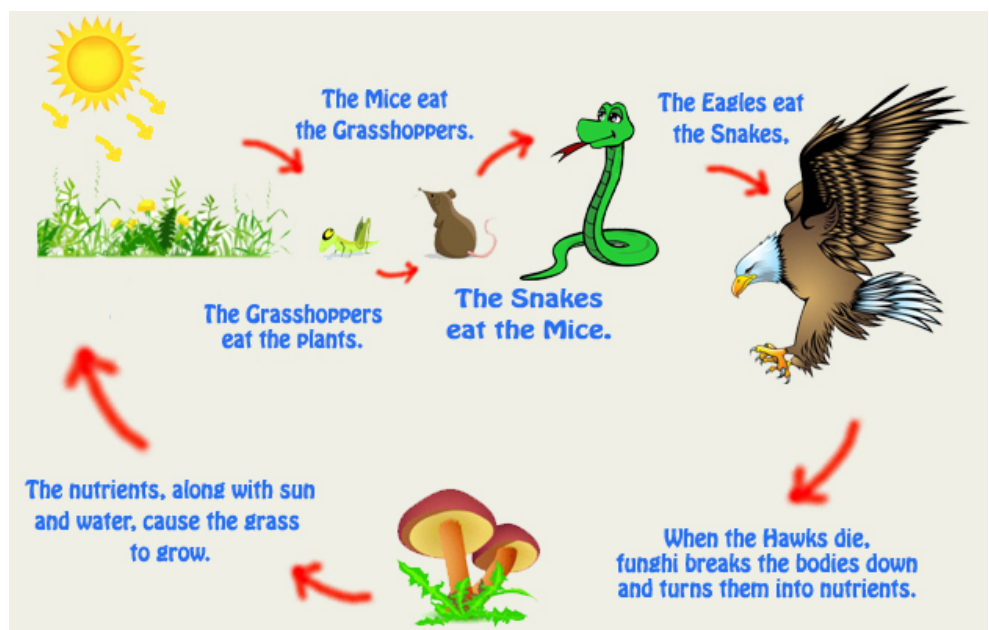


Common Pill Woodlouse get energy from eating _____.



California bulrush gets energy from _____.

In every habitat there are multiple (many) **food chains**. A food chain shows how energy moves in a system. Organisms get their energy from the food they eat! To make a food chain we need to think about who eats who. Food chains start with a **producer** then go to one or several **consumers**, and end with a **decomposer**.



Who eats who?

Look at the pictures from the first textbox. Can you make one food chain by listing or drawing the organisms? Think about where the energy for your food chain is starting (producer) and who eats that organism. Keep going from there.

Additional information for younger students



The Golden Eagle can eat small animals like rabbits, fish, or other small birds.



The Mosquitofish eats insects and very small animals called zooplankton.



Narrowleaf Willow makes its food from the sun in a process (steps) called **photosynthesis**.



The Bobcat eats squirrels, birds, mice, and rabbits. It is a good hunter and can eat animals that are a bit bigger than it.



The Field Cockroach is not a picky eater and will eat anything it can. It will eat meat, cheese and other things that are already dead.



Black-tailed Jackrabbits eat grasses and plants to get all the energy they need.



Common Pill Woodlouse, also called Roly-Polies, like to eat dead plants while hiding in wet places.



The Black-chinned hummingbird eats the nectar from flowers and small insects. Spiders are also a tasty treat for it.



California bulrush makes its food from the sun in a process (steps) called **photosynthesis**.

Pictures from:

Golden Eagle: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Birds/Golden-Eagles>

Black-chinned hummingbird: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black-chinned_hummingbird

Bobcat: <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1013597>

Mosquitofish: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gambusia_affinis_01.jpg

California bulrush <https://www.flickr.com/photos/127605180@N04/28258216359>

Narrowleaf Willow: https://www.flickr.com/photos/plant_diversity/5001878120

Black-tailed Jackrabbit: <https://pixabay.com/photos/black-tailed-jackrabbit-wildlife-1239773/>

Common Pill Woodlouse:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Common_Pill_Woodlouse_\(Armadillidium_vulgare\)_-_Guelph,_Ontario_02.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Common_Pill_Woodlouse_(Armadillidium_vulgare)_-_Guelph,_Ontario_02.jpg)

Field Cockroach: <https://bugguide.net/node/view/1263698>

Food Chain: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Complete-circle-foodchain.jpg>

Information about organism take from:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosquitofish>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/b/bobcat/>

<https://www.terminix.com/pest-control/cockroaches/pale-bordered-field-cockroach/>

http://birdweb.org/birdweb/bird/black-chinned_hummingbird

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/beneficials/beneficial-33_tiger_beetles.htm

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodlouse>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/43130-Lepus-californicus#Lifestyle>

Ideas for lesson take from:

<http://www.clarkcountynv.gov/parks/Pages/WetlandsPark/wp-natural-resources.aspx>

https://www.inaturalist.org/check_lists/174809-Clark-County-Wetlands-Park-Check-List?page=11

https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/UNBweb/owow_entire.pdf