

FOOD WEBS AND CHAINS

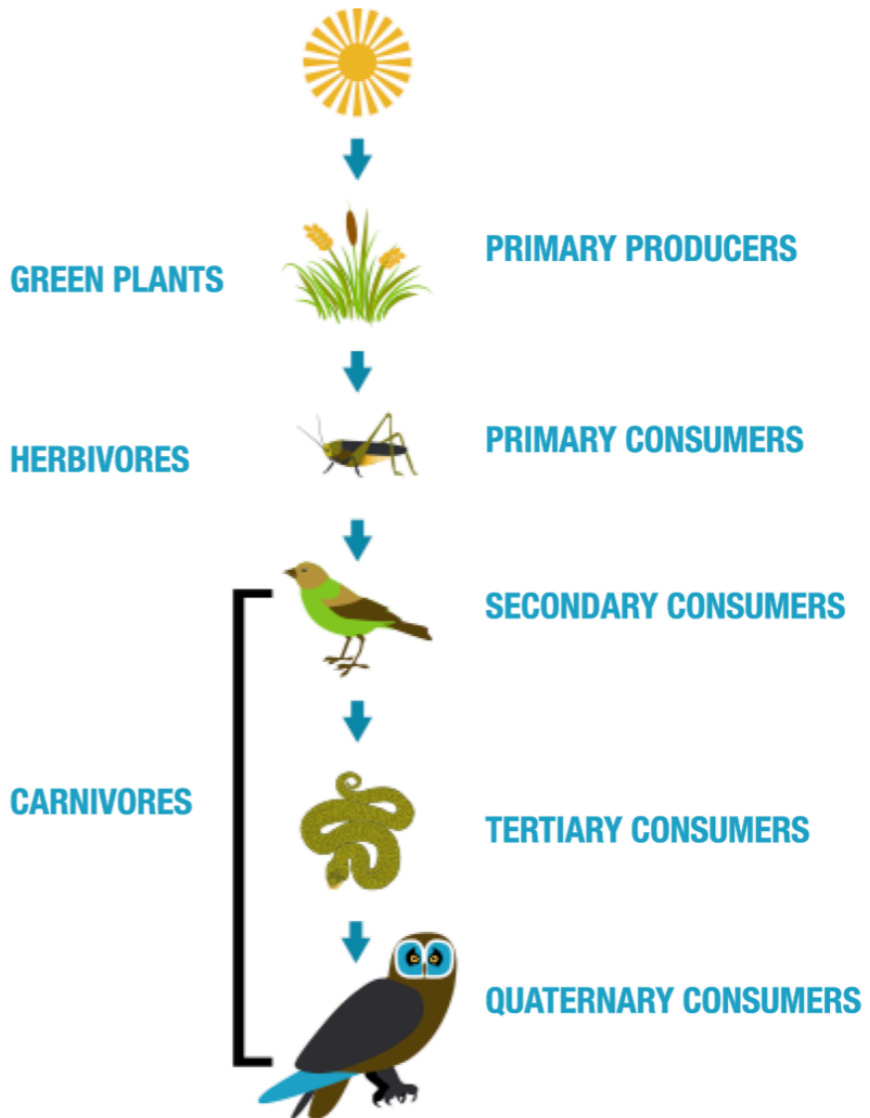
A **FOOD WEB** IS A SYSTEM OF INTERRELATED FOOD CHAINS WITHIN AN ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITY. A **FOOD CHAIN** IS A LINEAR NETWORK OF LINKS WITHIN A FOOD WEB WHEREBY, ENERGY AND NUTRIENTS MAY FLOW IN AN ECOSYSTEM.



 Organisms in food webs are grouped into categories called **trophic levels**.



SIMPLIFIED GRAZING TROPHIC CHAIN



Assigning organisms to **trophic levels** isn't always clear-cut. Most organisms eat more than one kind of food or are eaten by more than one type of predator, which is why we have **complex food webs** to connect many different food chains and trophic levels.