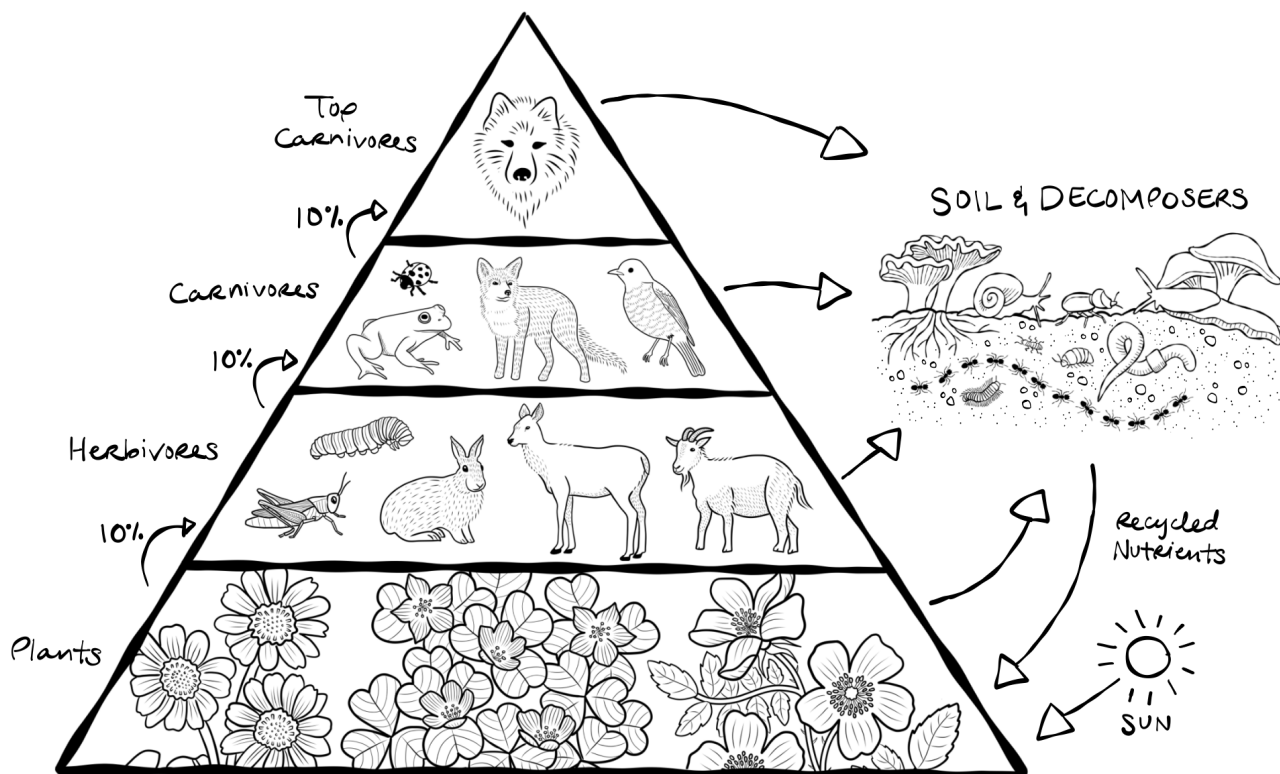


The Ecological Pyramid



Plants

PRIMARY PRODUCERS

Flowers, shrubs, trees and other plants are special because they are able to make their food from the sun.

Herbivores

PRIMARY CONSUMERS

Primary consumers – like caterpillars, grasshoppers, bunnies, deer and goats – eat only plants.

Carnivores

SECONDARY CONSUMERS

Secondary consumers – like ladybugs, frogs, foxes, and birds – eat other plants, animals and insects.

Top Carnivores

TERTIARY CONSUMERS

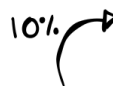
Tertiary consumers – like humans, wolves, bear and eagles – are at the very top of the food chain.



Soil & Decomposers

Decomposers play a very important role by helping organic materials break down and return to the Earth as nutrients. The plants then “eat” the nutrients through their roots and – with water and energy from the sun – grow big and strong, which in turn feeds everything else.

Next time you see a wriggly worm or a roly-poly, make sure to say “thank you!”



For the Parents

Consider this: each time energy is transferred between levels on the ecological pyramid (i.e. an animal eats a plant), only 10% of the energy is passed along and the rest is lost to heat.³ This means that, in general, the closer a diet and lifestyle is to the bottom of the pyramid, the less energy it takes to generate those resources.