

Vocabulary

Study the vocabulary words and definitions below.

biomass total amount of organisms per unit volume

carbohydrates compounds containing the elements carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen

carnivore an organism that eats animals
Example: lion, shark

commensalism a symbiotic relationship in which one organism benefits and the other is unaffected

consumers organisms that eat other organisms

decomposers organisms that eat dead plants and animals, as well as animal wastes

food chain the transfer of energy from the sun to producers to consumers; describes groups of organisms, each of which is dependent on another for food

food web interrelated food chains in an ecosystem; the feeding relationships between various plants and animals

herbivore organism that eats only plants
Example: sheep, manatee

hydrolysis a chemical reaction where water is used to break down compounds; typically occurs when food is digested

Vocabulary

krill	shrimp-like zooplankton
lipids	high energy nutrients such as fats and oils
metabolism	a chemical process in which animals break down and utilize nutrients
minerals	naturally occurring, inorganic elements and compounds found in water and soil that do not contain the element carbon
mutualism	a symbiotic relationship in which both organisms benefit
nutrients	any organic or inorganic material that an organism needs to metabolize, grow, and reproduce
omnivore	organism that eats both plants and animals <i>Example:</i> humans, killifish
parasitism	a symbiotic relationship in which one organism (the parasite) benefits and the other (the host) is harmed
photosynthesis	the process plants use to make the sugar glucose from water, carbon dioxide, and the energy in sunlight
phytoplankton	small, usually microscopic plant plankton that float or drift in the ocean
primary consumers	organisms that eat plants (producers)

Vocabulary

producers	organisms that make their own food through photosynthesis
protein	complex organic compound made up of amino acids
scavengers	animals that eat the remains of already dead animals and plants
secondary consumers	organisms that eat primary consumers but may also eat producers
symbiosis	a permanent, close relationship between two organisms that benefits at least one of them
tertiary consumers	organisms that eat secondary consumers but may also eat primary consumers and producers
zooplankton	small, usually microscopic animal plankton that float or drift in the ocean