

BIOLOGY BASICS Need to Know

The background of the cover is a composite image. The top half shows a close-up of a brown and black beetle clinging to a green reed stem. The bottom half shows a detailed view of a fish, possibly a carp, swimming underwater. The water surface is visible, separating the two scenes. The title 'Food Webs' is written in large, bold, yellow letters across the middle of the image.

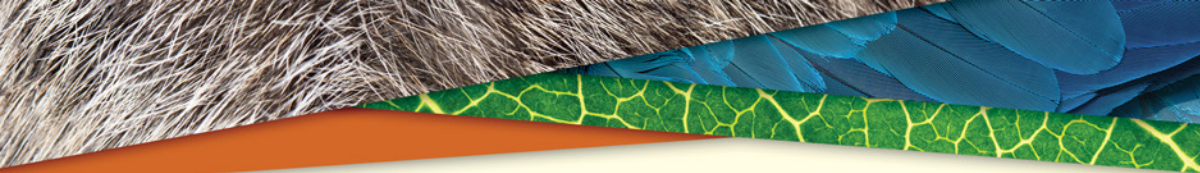
Food Webs

by Ruth Owen



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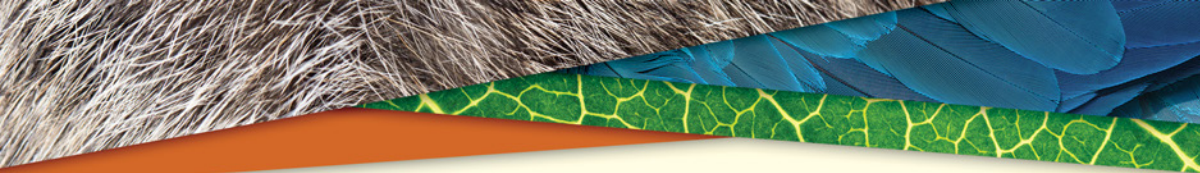


Who's Eating Who?

A grasshopper munches away in a field of corn. A hungry frog watches the little insect. But before the frog can hop to its meal, a crow attacks. It snaps up the grasshopper and grabs the frog, too! In this field, it's eat or be eaten.

A cornfield isn't the only place where hungry creatures can grab a bite. This happens in ponds, gardens, forests, deserts, and more. In every **habitat**, animals feed on plants and on one another.



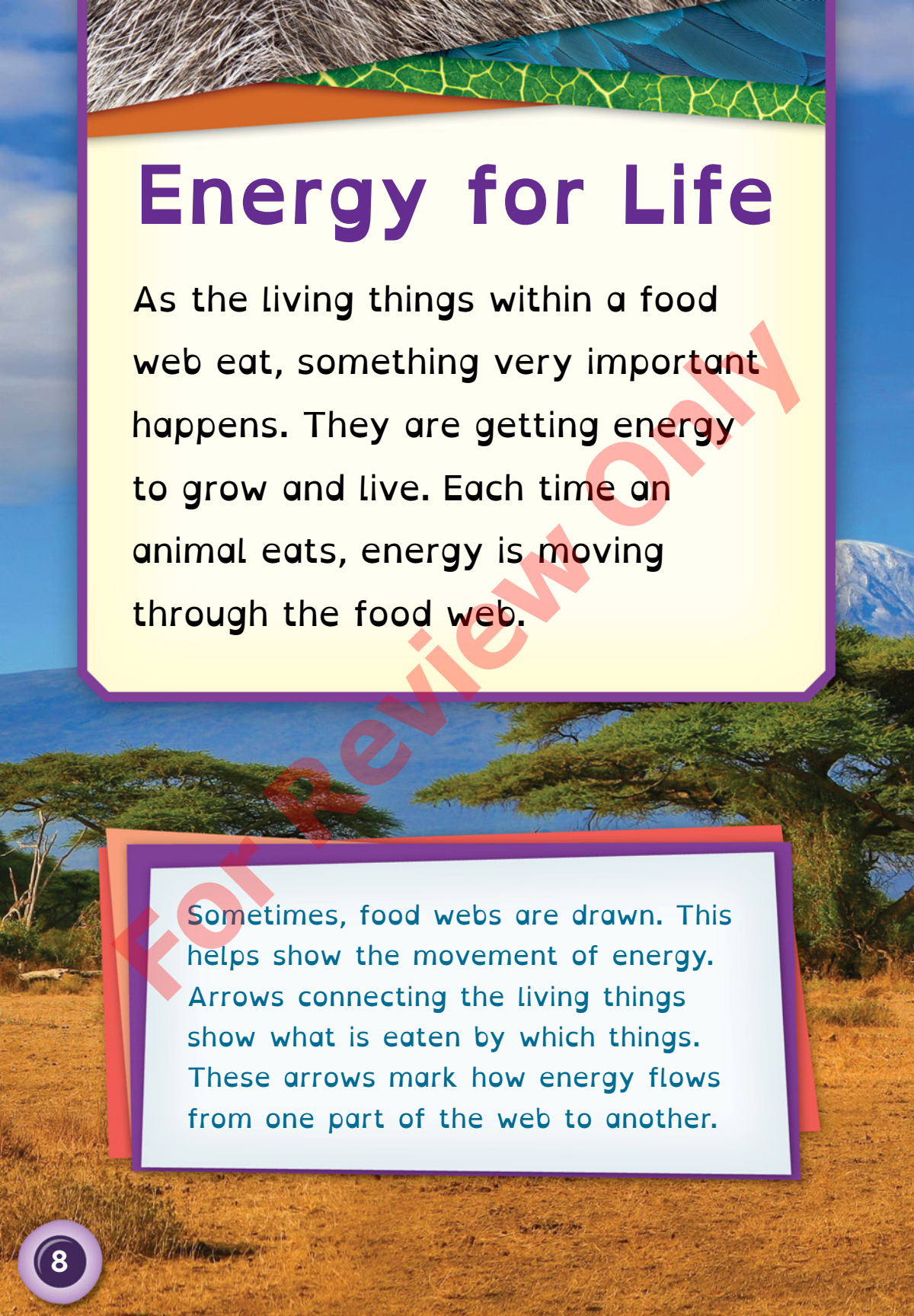


The animals and crops in the cornfield are part of a food web. This is a complicated system of feeding where living things eat others to survive. It connects all of the **food chains** in a place.

Food chains follow a straight line, with one creature eating another. A food web can show the many things that eat a single animal. It also shows the many things a single animal may eat.



Horses eat grass. So do sheep. Both kinds of animals eat other plants, too.

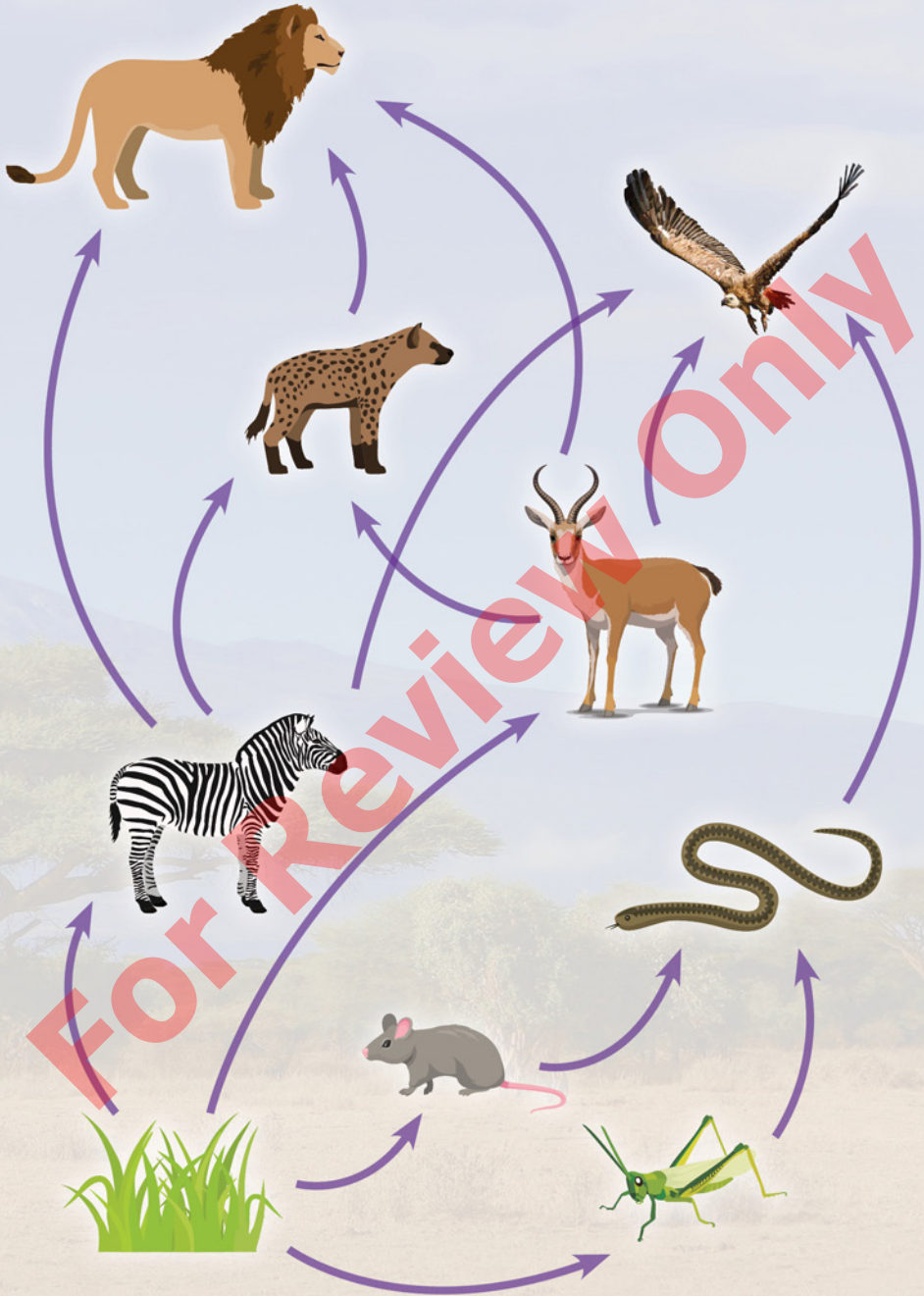


Energy for Life

As the living things within a food web eat, something very important happens. They are getting energy to grow and live. Each time an animal eats, energy is moving through the food web.

Sometimes, food webs are drawn. This helps show the movement of energy. Arrows connecting the living things show what is eaten by which things. These arrows mark how energy flows from one part of the web to another.

A Food Web



Producing Power

All food webs begin with **producers**.

These living things can produce, or make, their own food. Plants are the producers in almost all food webs.

How do plants get their energy? They make their own sugar for food through **photosynthesis**.

Most plants cannot eat food to get their energy. That is why they go through photosynthesis. However, there are a few plants that can get energy by eating small animals.



