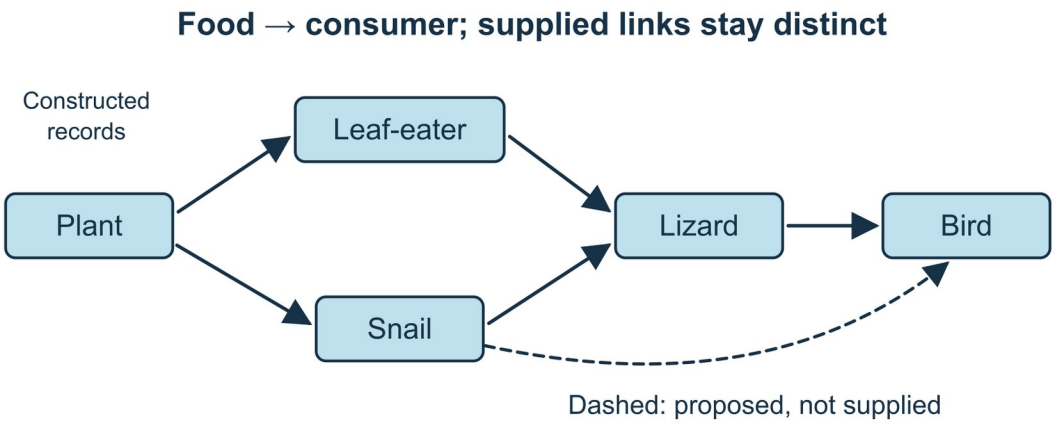
A food web with labelled assumptions

How do arrows and evidence change the meaning of a simple food web?

Build a food-web diagram from supplied fictional feeding records and keep a proposed link different from a reported one.

Make | 15–25 minutes, or one chain | The supplied example, read or heard, Optional scrap paper and a pen or pencil

Start here Use these invented records: Plant feeds Leaf-eater and Snail; Leaf-eater and Snail feed Lizard; Lizard feeds Bird. Arrows point from food to consumer.



One arrow rule and two evidence states

1 Write the arrow key

An arrow A → B means material and energy from A can reach B when B consumes A. It does not mean A actively helps or chases B.

2 Draw five supplied links

Draw Plant → Leaf-eater, Plant → Snail, Leaf-eater → Lizard, Snail → Lizard and Lizard → Bird. Keep every direction consistent with the key.

3 Label a new question

Someone proposes that Bird also consumes Snail. Draw that optional idea as a dashed link labelled ‘not supplied’, rather than adding it to the five solid recorded links.

4 Explain what the model leaves open

Name a missing detail such as quantities, seasonal change or other foods. The web does not tell you exactly how any population would change.

Constructed food web five reported links

The feeding statements are invented model records, not observations of real animals or universal species diets.

• Solid links: Plant → Leaf-eater; Plant → Snail; Leaf-eater → Lizard; Snail → Lizard; Lizard → Bird.

• Each arrow runs from the consumed resource to its consumer.

• Snail → Bird is a separate proposed link, shown dashed and marked not supplied.

What this example can show The model omits amounts and many relationships. It does not establish actual diets, complete energy budgets or a definite population outcome.

A different way

Follow only Plant → Snail → Lizard, or read the links aloud. No animals, food, samples or outdoor visit are required.

If you want to go further

Remove one supplied link in a newly labelled model. Describe which route disappears without asserting a measured population change.

Something to notice

Could someone distinguish a supplied relationship from a proposed one in my drawing?

Read or explore more

Horizon topic Food Webs

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/food-webs/

Horizon topic Habitats Niches

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/habitats-niches/

Horizon topic Ecology

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/ecology/

OpenStax, Rice University 46.2 Energy Flow through Ecosystems

https://openstax.org/books/biology-2e/pages/46-2-energy-flow-through-ecosystems

OpenStax, Rice University 46.1 Ecology of Ecosystems

https://openstax.org/books/biology-2e/pages/46-1-ecology-of-ecosystems