

# Food Webs in our Waterways

Ngadjung Ngunna Yaardarang – Water is our Dreaming (Ngunnawal)

Wherever you live, your home is connected to our waterways. When it rains, water runs off our homes and gardens into stormwater drains. This water then flows into our creeks, rivers, and lakes.

Our waterways have many different plants and animals. This is called **biodiversity**.

All these living things in the waterway are connected in a food web. More connections in the food web help it stay healthy and adapt to change.

BIODIVERSITY  
MAKES OUR  
ECOSYSTEMS  
STRONG

## ROLES IN THE FOOD WEB

**Producers:** Plants are producers. Plants capture the energy of the sun and use it to grow through a process called photosynthesis.

**Decomposers:** Decomposers break down dead plants and animals. This allows the energy contained in producers and consumers to move through the food web again.

**Consumers:** Consumers get energy from other living things by eating producers, decomposers and smaller consumers. Energy moves in the food web when animals eat plants, organic matter or other animals.



## KEY

1. Rush - *Juncus australis*
2. Ribbon Weed - *Vallisneria australis*
3. Nardoo - *Marsilea drummondii*
4. Water Slater - order *Isopoda*
5. Segmented Worm - order *Oligochaeta*
6. Freshwater Shrimp - order *Decapoda*
7. Common Yabby - *Cherax destructor*
8. Freshwater Snail - order *Littorinimorpha*
9. Striped Marsh Frog - Frog - *Limnodynastes peronii*
10. Dragonfly - Nymph & Adult - order *Odonata*
11. Australian Smelt - *Retropinna semoni*
12. Murray Cod - *Maccullochella peelii*
13. Platypus - *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*
14. Rakali - *Hydromys chrysogaster*
15. Purple Swamp Hen - *Porphyrio porphyrio*
16. Australian Wood Duck - *Chenonetta jubata*
17. Eastern Longneck Turtle - *Chelodina longicollis*
18. Red Bellied Black Snake - *Pseudechis porphyriacus*
19. Striped Marsh Frog - Frog - *Limnodynastes peronii*
20. Freshwater Plankton - Zooplankton, Phytoplankton & Bacterioplankton

## ENERGY FLOW IN A FOOD CHAIN

Food chains make up a food web. Plants use sunlight to grow and feed microbes and waterbugs. Platypus hunt and eat waterbugs. Platypus need to consume 1/3 of their body weight in waterbugs daily – that's like you needing to eat 25 pizzas a day!



What we do at home and in our garden affects our waterways and the animals living there. To keep our waterways healthy, make sure only rain goes down the storm water drain.

Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch is supported by the ACT Government

To learn more about our wonderful waterways visit [www.act.waterwatch.org.au](http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au)



**WATERWATCH**  
Upper Murrumbidgee  
Communities Caring for Catchments