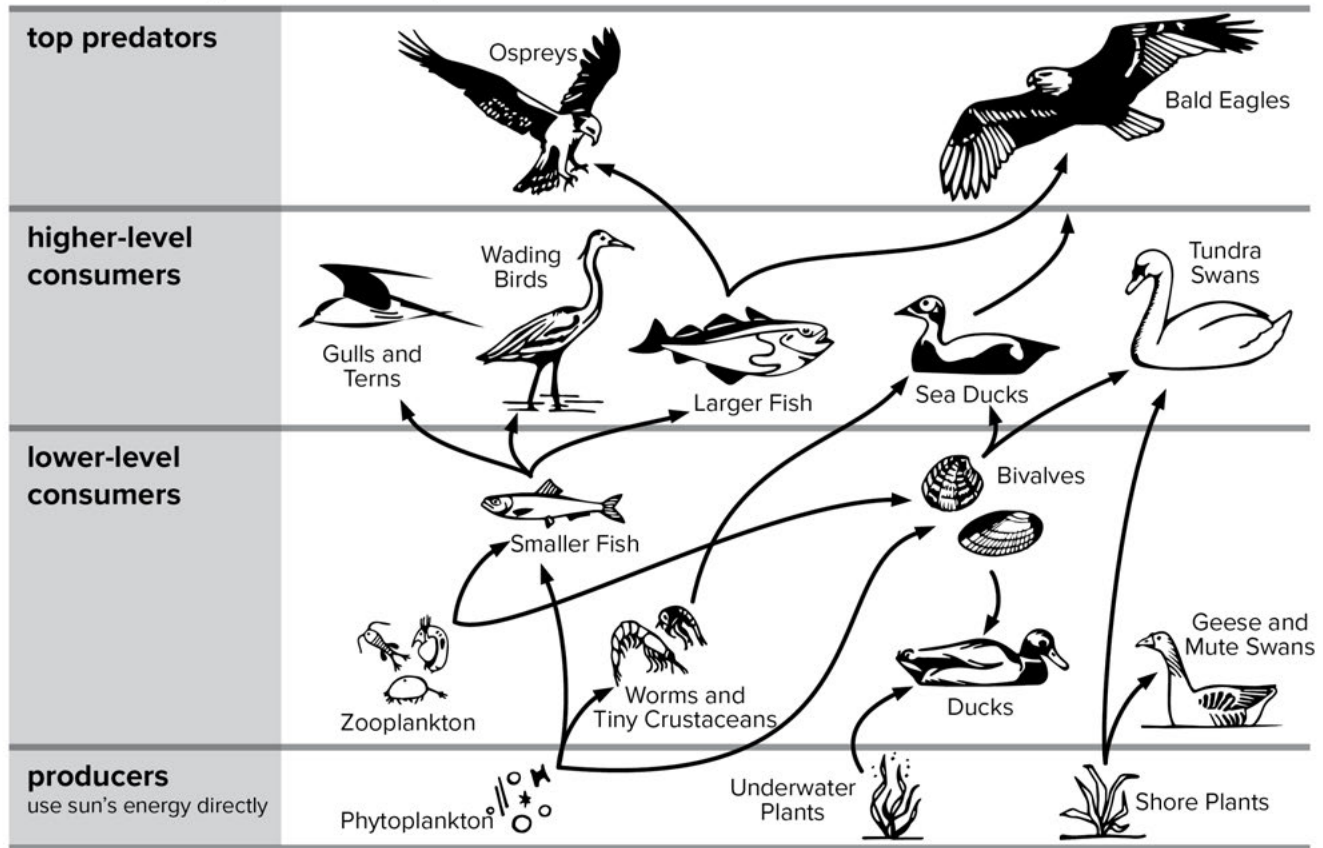



Speaking Scientifically

A Chesapeake Bay Food Web



Why is the oyster's job so important?

Oysters are shown in the food web above in the bivalves group. Oysters not only eat plankton, they also make the water better for plankton. Above you can see two types of plankton that many other animals depend upon. Zooplankton are tiny animals and phytoplankton are tiny plants.

 Looking at the Chesapeake Bay Food Web above, use the arrows to trace a single food chain. Then fill in this chart:

for example:

PHYTOPLANKTON are eaten by... SMALLER FISH are eaten by... LARGER FISH are eaten by... OSPREYS

are eaten by... are eaten by... are eaten by...

Discuss with a partner all the problems that could occur if there were not enough of those little oysters. Imagine that the water were too cloudy for the sun to reach the plankton and the submerged aquatic vegetation. Could this situation affect a top predator such as the osprey or the bald eagle?