

Hand out one set of cards per team

ALGAE

Description:

- A simple plant at the lowest level of the food chain.
- Producer, so it makes its own food from photosynthesis.
- Eaten by **minnow**, **mayfly larvae**, **pond snails** and **freshwater shrimp**.

Interesting information:

- These little organisms pack a powerful punch. When they get out of balance, they produce toxic waste and can deplete the oxygen in the water. This is called an algal bloom and can happen when fertilisers get into the water.



MINNOW

Description:

- A small fish.
- Omnivore/ Secondary consumer/ detritivore.
- Also eats **detritus**, **bristle worms**, **aquatic plants** and **insects**.
- Eaten by predators including birds and big fish such as **perch**.

Interesting information:

- Female minnows produce up to 1,000 eggs during each breeding season.
- Detritivores break down detritus (dead plants and animals) with decomposers, such as bacteria. Nutrients released can be used by primary producers.



Hand out one set of cards per team

COMMON TOAD

Description:

- Amphibian.
- Carnivore/ secondary consumer.
- Diet includes **aquatic mayfly larvae, bristle worms** and **pond snails**.
- Predators include the **grass snake**.

Interesting information:

- Common toads breed in ponds during the spring and spend the rest of the year feeding in woodland, gardens and grassland. They hibernate over winter, often under log piles or stones. Toads are famous for migrating back to their breeding ponds on the first warm, damp evenings of the year.



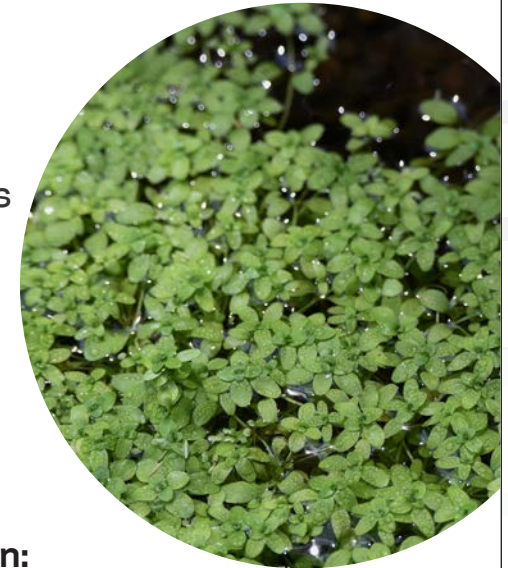
STARWORT

Description:

- A plant.
- Producer, so it makes its own food from photosynthesis.
- Eaten by **minnow, mayfly larvae, pond snails** and **crustaceans**.

Interesting information:

- Starwort is useful in improving water quality, absorbing nutrients, and maintaining a clean and healthy pond. It provides shelter for other fish and wildlife. Other plants in the same trophic level include milfoil, pond weed and willow moss.



Hand out one set of cards per team

GRASS SNAKE

Description:

- A widespread snake that lives on land but that can hunt in the water.
- Carnivore/ secondary consumer.
- Diet includes primary consumers **freshwater shrimp, pond snails and minnow, tadpoles, frog, toad, newt.**



Interesting information:

- The grass snake is the UK's largest snake. It is particularly fond of wetland habitats but can also be found in dry grasslands and in gardens, especially those with a pond nearby. During the summer, grass snakes can be spotted basking in the sun or swimming in the water.

PERCH

Description:

- Medium-sized fish.
- Carnivore/ secondary consumer.
- Diet includes primary consumers such as **mayfly larvae, freshwater shrimp, pond snails and minnow.**



Interesting information:

- Perch live in large ponds, lakes, reservoirs, canals and lowland rivers, and are often seen in shoals.
- Females produce up to 300,000 eggs.
- Perch are expert hunters and have rows of small teeth for gripping prey. Their stripey pattern helps them to hide amongst weeds.

Hand out one set of cards per team

MAYFLY LARVAE

Description:

- Small insect larvae.
- Herbivore/ primary consumer/ detritivore.
- Diet includes **aquatic plants, detritus** and **algae**.
- Predators include the **perch** and **toads**.

Interesting information:

- Young mayfly larvae live underwater for several months often over winter.
- Most people have been taught that adult mayflies only live for one day. But the mayfly can live for up to a fortnight.
- Detritivores break down detritus (dead plants and animals) with decomposers, such as bacteria. Nutrients released can be used by primary producers.



FRESHWATER SHRIMP

Description:

- Small crustacean.
- Omnivore/ primary consumer/ detritivore.
- Diet includes **starwort, detritus** and **algae**.
- Predators include the **perch** and **grass snake**.

Interesting information:

- Freshwater shrimps are good indicators of whether a pond is polluted or not.
- Their numbers will be highest when the water is relatively clean.
- Detritivores break down detritus (dead plants and animals) with decomposers, such as bacteria. Nutrients released can be used by primary producers.



Hand out one set of cards per team

POND SNAIL

Description:

- Small mollusc.
- Herbivore/ primary consumer/ detritivore.
- Diet includes **aquatic plants, detritus** and **algae**.
- Predators include the **perch, toads** and **grass snakes**.



Interesting information:

- There are about 40 different kinds of water snails in Britain, varying in size from the tiny Nautilus Ram's-horn (just 2 or 3 mm) to the Great Pond Snail (up to 4 cm).

TUBIFEX WORMS

Description:

- Segmented worm.
- Primary consumer/ detritivore.
- Diet mainly based on **detritus**, but they also eat **algae**.
- Predators include the **freshwater shrimp, toads** and **perch**.



Interesting information:

- Tubifex worms may look ugly and a little creepy, but they are actually good for the pond as they recycle nutrients and eat the detritus.